

50  
HERE AND THERE  
WITH



→ A-N-T 91 ←

"THE FAMOUS TRAMP"

WHO TRAVELED 500,000 MILES FOR \$75





Yours truly  
G. H. IVINS  
The Rambler



# HERE AND THERE

WITH

→A-NO.1←

AMERICA'S MOST FAMOUS TRAMP

---

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF

---

FIRST EDITION

---

PRICE, 25 CENTS

---

COPYRIGHT, 1921  
BY  
THE A-NO.1 PUBLISHING COMPANY

All subject matter, as well as all illustrations, and especially the title of this book, are fully protected by copyright, and their use in any form whatsoever will be vigorously prosecuted for infringement.

---

THE

→A-NO.1←

(TRADE MARK)

PUBLISHING COMPANY

ERIE, PENNSYLVANIA

U. S. A.



# Where to Obtain Our Books

## *To The Public:----*

You may purchase our books of any news agent, aboard every passenger train in in the United States, Canada, England and Australia, carrying a "news butcher." At depot and other news stands and all up-to-date news and book stores. If residing far in the country, your store keeper, always willing to handsomely add to his income, may get our titles for you by requesting us to furnish him the address of the nearest jobber.

## *To The Dealer:----*

The American News Company and all its branches throughout the United States and Canada, and all other reliable jobbers from Halifax to San Diego and from Dawson City to Key West *always* carry a complete line of our books in stock.

Dealers should furnish a fair display to our books and explain to customers that their text is not only good reading but also that the stories are based on actual experiences of the author who wasted thirty years on the Road.

Do not bury the "A. No. 1 Books" on shelves or in train boxes, but give them a chance to prove their great selling merit. One copy sold is sure to bring a sale of the complete set to the reader, so entertaining are the stories which cover every interesting phase of tramp life.

Yours respectfully,  
The A. No. 1 Publishing Company

Erie, Pa.  
U. S. A.



## CHAPTER I.

### The Lucky Landlord of Enterprise.

---

**M**AGNIFICENT orange groves and orchards of other varieties of the delicious fruits of the tropical citrus family thickly dotted the landscape spreading southward beyond the gates of Jacksonville—at the time antedating that national calamity which even to this late date is still being referred to with bated breath by the inhabitants of Florida as the “Great Freeze.” Low temperatures, previously never experienced, overnight destroyed agricultural values conservatively estimated as surpassing the fifty million dollar mark. As a logical sequence of such sudden and fearful destruction, a virtually complete pauperization not only descended upon the citizens of Florida but struck people who winterly sojourned in the state and there had become financially interested in investments in citrus property.

Among the transient citizens—that is, those who annually returned to their northern homes at the conclusion of the inclement season—was a considerable representation who hailed from countries oversea. Again, among these foreigners a number were notables, while others were members of the Old-World aristocracy who in their homeland were rated as of the ultra-select set of society. Oddly enough, these distinguished strangers seemed to prefer braving the hazards and hardships entailed by a late fall or, still rougher, a midwinter traverse of the storm-riven Atlantic to the negotiating in comparative comfort the voyage to near-Monaco, the charming resorts of the French and Italian Rivas, Rome and Turin, Palermo



of Sicily, Brindisi at the foot of continental Italy, the enchanting isles of the Aegean Sea, Cairo of Egypt, the vale of the Nile and the other more or less convenient tropical destinations catering to the entertainment of travelers endeavoring to escape from the harsh winter weather common to Central and Northern Europe.

The exceedingly profitable pursuit of the citrus industry furnished the powerful magnet which, almost irresistibly, drew Florida-ward the cream of the winter tourist travel of the universe at large. For so very generous proved the annual revenue to be obtained by the marketing of the fruit production of any orchard of average acreage having attained no less than the sixth year of growth under constant attention and careful cultivation, that the returns usually more than sufficed to reimburse the owner for the not inconsiderable household expenditures incurred by himself and his immediate family circle for the duration of their transient stay within the state. Of properties planted not over ten years it was deemed a most commonplace performance when, additionally, the income derived compensated the resorters for the roundtrip transportation in Pullmans from Florida to their summertime residence. Occasionally, and this more especially in the instance of the older and the more extensive of the estates, after fully meeting the heavy outlays enumerated, there generally remained a cash balance which paid a right royal dividend on the monetary investment involved.

Therefore, no sooner had the newcomer in the state arrived at a definite decision in the selection of the locality suiting his personal preference in the matter of desirability of residence, than he set himself the task of gaining possession of an orange grove or orchard either specializing on limes, lemons, grape



fruit, mandarins, tangerines or all these or still others of the fruits belonging to the citrus classification. Tourists having the command of ample resources to engineer such a deal, invariably purchased estates of this character already in bearing, while visitors financially less endowed began at the bottom rung of the remunerative vocation by planting a grove and then patiently nursing the trees to their fruiting maturity.

But as every bright ray of sunshine is cursed to carry in its wake the uncanny shadow, thus, and forming a most undesirable adjunct to the annual tourist incursion that gladdened the heart of the Floridians by accelerating commercial activities, with the onset of the wintry weather there came drifting into the state a vast horde of uncouth professional tramps.

In the piping days of plenty preceding the visitation of the Great Freeze, the ragged nomads of the Road, even more liberally than this is their standard wont nowadays, patronized Florida with their unwelcome presence. For then the state was fairly studded with settlements which ranged from merest hamlets to the more pretentious cities. These communities drew an overflowing measure of acceptable prosperity from the business created by the presence of the citrus estates which, park-like, surrounded them in every direction of the compass. A comprehensive example of the golden opportunities then offered all comers might readily be adduced from the mere statement that so heavy was the volume of the freight and passenger traffic given to the railroads crisscrossing the peninsular district of Florida that it was a common matter to meet stations distributed at intervals of less than half mile distances along the right of ways of the railroads.



**I**N the days just prior to the advent of the disaster of the Great Freeze, the author was roaming in mountainous Eastern Tennessee, when a decidedly unpleasant coldish nip in the air at the dawn of day announced the approach of the moment of betaking myself to the natural shelter against the fierce blasts of the Arctic-bred tempests afforded by mildly climated Florida. I heeded the call, as likewise did all other enterprising hoboes roving in the territory east of the waters of the Mississippi and the Missouri. Vagabonds roaming in the domain located to the west of this water division of Wanderland, fled for refuge to the country stretching along the line drawn between the city of New Orleans and the coast of Southern California, whenever Jack Frost went into regular action.

In Florida, and largely due to the immense revenues all too easily acquired by natives and tourists, tramps fared most famously in the matter of provender and, quite frequently, generous gifts of money. The latter donations were mostly handed out by the wealthier element of the outlanders wintering in the state. Butlers and other haughty household menials in their employ, who ever were on the alert to forestall the beggar at the gate gaining a personal interview with the master of the house, had been left behind in the Old Country to guard the interests of their absent employer. Quite unversed with the devious schemes enacted by the American mendicants, the affluent strangers in the land readily fell for the bait covered by the artful tales of woe and exquisite misfortune recited by the wily panhandlers.

To work the countryside more thoroughly, I quit hoboeing the railroad cars for tramping afoot on the



public highways. To meet personal requirements while on the way overland, I had taken charge of a cast-away satchel in which I carried an assortment of necessities of every-day application.

I drifted about with easy stages, and when spring opened and the days became rather too hot and sultry for good comfort, my thoughts naturally turned to the moment of my breaking away to a section favored with a less oppressive climate.

It was on a Sunday that I came walking from Enterprise Junction, on the "Jacksonville, Tampa & Key West Railroad," which nowadays forms an important component of the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad, to the town of Enterprise. Quitting the junction point long before the hour of breakfast, and though the distance to Enterprise was but a scant mile, still it was past high noon when I finally arrived at my destination.

While en route on the highway, perchance, I walked by a limpid pond. Fish disported in the water. As I happened to be an angler so consistent that I habitually carried fishing tackle tucked away in some nook in my apparel, I promptly fell a victim to the lure so tempting to a fisherman. The hours fled so unawares that midday was at hand when I tore myself from the most excellent fishing.

In the meanwhile my appetite had become most keenly wetted not only by reason of having missed that morning connections with my breakfast but even more so on account of the bracing air that was heavily charged with fragrant scent exhaled by the myriads of citrus blossoms profusely blooming in the orchards near at hand.

When I reached the limits of Enterprise, I went among the residences to seek employment in payment for my dinner. Although I diligently applied this and other schemes available to the vagrant in quest of



victuals, everywhere I knocked I was sent empty-handed on my way, though the folks I approached treated me quite civilly. I soon arrived at the conclusion, that there was nothing the matter with the inhabitants of Enterprise but that the fault solely lay with the circumstance that the day happened to be Sunday.

In all the households of America a most astonishing regularity was observed in the time of the serving of the three meals of the six ordinary days of the week. Tramps calling at the kitchen entrances during the hour intervening between seven and eight of the morning were likely assured to obtain a fair share of the family breakfast. Dinner in the States and luncheon, its Canadian equivalent, was punctually tabled between noon and the half hour following. The repast of the evening commonly fell around six o'clock.

But with the serving of the meals on the Sunday it was quite a different story. Each and every household seemed to have installed a strictly private schedule that was almost certain to vary from every other meal plan of the neighborhood. So displaced were the meal hours, that on a Sunday it amounted to the veriest windfall of sheer good fortune should a Weary Willie arrive at the gate of a residence at the opportune moment to be in personal evidence while a repast was being partaken of by the occupants of the home. Enterprise furnished another glaring proof of what a hobo had to contend with on every Lord's Day of his wayfaring career.

Said the mistress of the first residence I approached: "So exceedingly sorry that I cannot accommodate you with even an indifferent lunch, my good man. We breakfasted at eleven and now are making ready to attend the Sunday school, and, therefore, I am quite



sure you won't expect me to prepare another meal especially for you."

I saw the light and went to visit a neighbor, where I was met by the master of the house who revealed a pointed bit of domestic imposition as he ruefully complained: "On Sunday my wife does not care to rise until quite late in the afternoon and I am forced to look after my own meals, and as Towser cleans the plates, there isn't anything left."

Another lady exposed the secret of her meal timetable, when she replied: "There isn't anything edible in the house, as we breakfasted at seven, shall dine at one and then serve a light lunch an hour or so only before we retire for the night."

Still another housewife groaned: "Here it's eight o'clock for the morning meal, at three we have our luncheon and at seven a course dinner."

She kindly invited me to put in appearance at the house at any convenient meal hour, but I was famished and went on and on with my search until I was presented with a dollar by a resident whose accent of speech, appearance and general deportment betokened him to be a citizen hailing from a foreign shore.

Deciding to invest the donation on the purchase of a substantial meal, I learned that no restaurant had located at Enterprise where business flourished during the term of the winter tourist season only, while commercial stagnation ruled the remainder of the year. But there were hotels galore, and they were of a grade showing their exclusive catering to the patronage of the wealthier tourists.

Harrassed by hunger, I threw aside the fine distinctions of caste when I hiked into the hotel nearest at hand, the "Victoria Inn." Depositing my satchel with the hotel clerk, the latter invited the registering of my name and address in the guest book of the inn.



On casually glancing over the list of the addresses previously inscribed on the register, with surprise I noted that almost every stranger stopping at the hotel was the bearer of a title of nobility. Because I happened to be straightway American-born and made light sport of the frills, foibles and follies connected with the observation of the various birth rights sacredly adhered to by Europeans, my republican belief in the equality of all mankind was ruffled so sorely by the odd-sounding prefixes I perused, that actuated by the spirit of practical joking I blithely registered as "Lord Warework, London, England."

Then I bravely strutted into the gorgeously appointed dining room of the "Victoria Inn." My rough attire of the Road stood out in a rather ugly contrast against the elegant apparel of the ladies and their faultlessly dressed gentlemen escorts. Coolly ignoring the shafts of resentment cast in my direction by both, guests and hotel hirelings, I executed such amazing inroads on the food that the waiters, though otherwise masterly they might have been trained in the control of their personal emotions, gasped with astonishment.

After luncheon, I checked out the satchel and then began the return trip afoot to the railroad junction. The playful antics of the fish in the pond, where I had angled in the forenoon, called for another term of the sport I doted on. Dusk had begun to shroud the landscape when the rumbling of a northbound train was heard in the distance. This went to remind me of my intention to retreat to a more temperate climate. I acted on the impulse of the moment. Discarding the satchel at the shore of the pond, I hurried away to take hobo passage aboard the approaching train. The latter was a local freight that made all the intermediate stops en route.



At that, I had quite failed to pay a due consideration to the abrupt changes in the weather, such as were ordinary occurrences throughout the territory of the Southland. In the course of the night, and while I was dodging hither and thither to avoid hailing contact with members of the train crew who were searching the cars for hobo helpers to handle the freight for their passage, the tail end of a blizzard came sweeping down on fair Florida, where the tempest sent the mercury of the thermometer hugging the freezing point so closely that at Green Cove Springs I deserted the train and then by gradual stages began drifting returnward to the warm lake region of Florida.

While at Tavares I was chopping kindlings for provender, the owner of the residence came to visit with me. He eyed me strangely askance.

"Aren't you 'Lord Warework'? he exploded, finally.

"'Lord Warework'?" I echoed surprised, having quite forgotten the registering of the fictitious address over at Enterprise.

"You're the same fellow I saw stopping at the 'Victoria Inn'," he said positively, refreshing my memory to where I recalled the odd incident.

Entertaining no hope to escape a frank confession of the laughable deception, I regaled the man to a detailed review of the affair.

"A dandy practical joke, wasn't it, though?" I beamed on finishing with the report.

"You dare call such miserable trick 'a practical joke'?" soberly retorted the citizen of Tavares. "On the morning of the Monday, people who had previously seen you fishing at the pond, while passing on the highway espied the satchel you had abandoned. Horror-stricken they raced to town and there spread the alarm that in all probability a titled European had met



with accidental drowning. Fearing the worst, Landlord Ericson engaged darkies to seine the lake. When this effort effected no solution of the disappearance of the stranger, the hotel keeper invited the residents of Enterprise to form searching parties to scour the countryside for a trace of the missing traveler. Even including the distinguished guests of the hotels, all Enterprise willingly obeyed the urgent summons. When we came straggling back into town with empty hands, someone suggested an inspection of the contents of the satchel for information that might have led to a revelation of the identity of the owner.

"Amid the breathless interest of the tired folks who had participated in the futile search, the lock of the satchel was forced. A howl of deepest derision was raised when ragged raiment, frayed railroad time tables and other worthless junk proclaimed the property to be that of a professional hobo. Ericson took the disappointment so keenly to heart, that he had to take to his bed and even to this day cannot bear a mention of anything reminding him of the straying of 'Lord Beware-of-Work', as we quickly and correctly translated the title you had assumed. If I were in your place, by all means would I avoid running afoul of Ericson, for he not only is an innkeeper but also the justice of the peace for the Enterprise town district."

Having aired his personal opinion, the fellow disgruntledly went into his residence. In fear that the citizen might communicate over the telephone with the authorities, I precipitately quit the wood chopping without waiting to claim my lunch. When I had traveled a safe distance beyond Tavares, I hugely enjoyed a contemplation of the immense discomfiture which had rewarded Landlord Ericson as a result of my jolly scribbling in the guest journal of the "Victoria Inn."





Frenchy recognized by the Floridian.



THE second winter, succeeding the one made historically memorable by the Great Freeze, brought me back to Florida. Long before I crossed the state line, I was practically to learn of the wide range of the indescribable havoc enacted by the tragedy of Nature. In the years gone by train on train—virtually forming an uninterrupted procession racing on limited schedule hauling their immense cargoes of oranges, other citrous fruits and early vegetables to the northern markets—were passing north-bound, while returning trains of “empties” afforded no end of opportunities for safe hiding places to floaters pilgrimating to the warmer section. This great traffic had petered away to a lone “bobtailed” local freight which, at that, on alternating days only ran back or forth, respectively, over each railroad division. The passenger carrying business was in an even worse shape. The many trains-de-luxe of former years had been discontinued. A few accommodation trains offered to trespassers the only available other transportation over the numerous railroad systems centering at Jacksonville, the gate and getaway city of Florida.

Arriving within the state, I witnessed the effects of the cold which, though continuing but comparatively few hours, had ruthlessly destroyed every vestige of such vegetation as Nature had not intended to exist in the lands to the north of the Tropic of Cancer. The brief spell of extreme weather had frozen to solid ice the life-sustaining sap circulating through the plants and trees affected by cold, even that pulsating in the farthest reaches of their roots.

At Jacksonville, where I had so often visited during the height of the tourist rush of the winter, all the palatial hotels—in other days the justifiable pride of the citizens—were closed to business. The wharves



of the water front, the gage of commerce of a seaboard city, were barricaded against public access. The thoroughfares of both the business and residence districts offered a most forlorn sight by stores and homes being placarded with weather-worn "For Rent" and "For Sale" posters. In whatever direction one chanced to turn were encountered the telltales that the residents of the state had been brutally disillusioned in their implicit trust in an eternal continuance of the mild winter weather which without a noteworthy breach had favored Florida for so many, many years.

South of the metropolis, the country at large displayed even more conspicuously the ravages of the cold snap. The territory was converted into a howling desolation from which a teeming population had fled as before a mortal plague. Nowhere, so it seemed, was there any sensible satisfaction to be gained from a further investing of human endeavor or financial resources on a revival of the utterly ruined citrus industry which by the proof of the Great Freeze had been placed in the status of a mere gamble from which Jack Frost was bound, sooner or later, to emerge again as the winner of the board. Grove on grove, erstwhile containing row after row of evergreen foliaged trees groaning under their load of attractive tropical fruit and beautiful blossoms were transformed into veritable graveyards of ghastly stripped tree skeletons. Everywhere magnificent homes could be seen abandoned to the fury of the elements as not even the astute gatherer of taxes could dispose of the properties at any price. There were ever so many villages entirely deserted by their inhabitants, while in others there remained but a handful of people, mostly darkies, while towns and cities had lost a major portion of their permanent and all but an insignificant number of their transient population.



FATE so willed it, that late on an afternoon while I was hoboing northbound, coming from Tampa-way, I was fired off a train at Enterprise Junction. Vividly recollecting the tard warning I had received at Tavares in the matter of exercising an extreme caution against my meeting with the Landlord Ericson of the "Victoria Inn," I vainly staged every desperate means resorted to by trespassers defying the orders of a train crew.

I slipped off my outfit of railroad overalls which I habitually donned to protect my street attire against damage whenever I took to the cars. Tucking the overalls conveniently under my arm, I looked about for an opportunity to connect with a meal as all through the day, while waiting for a train to stop at a lone water tank, I had tasted no morsel of food. Of the residences looming in view from the station platform, all had their doors and the windows at the street level boarded up—an infallible indication that the houses were standing unoccupied. Enterprise offered the only haven of relief for my pressing need for provender. My ruffled conscience, though, sorely rebelled against my running the great risk of encountering Ericson, who, being of Scandinavian descent by rule of his name, likely might prove as implacably unforgiving as had been the other people of his race I happened to offend. But hunger gnawed ever more annoying. Then I espied a gang of colored track repairers toiling nearby, and went to meet them to question them on matters in which, for cause quite obvious, I personally was vitally interested.

"All dem yere hotels over in Enterprise done shut down tight and dere owners lit out de very fust thing after de Big Freeze, sah," reported the foreman of the



section gang. "De 'Victoria Inn,' yuh is inquiring about, is done, too, went out of business and de boss has done disjappeahed as done all de odder white foaks dat used to come to winter in dese yere parts."

On strength of this information, I decided to brave a call in town, where, so as to observe a still further precaution against untoward surprises, I intended to purchase food with a bit of loose change I carried for need in emergencies. For another reliable protection, I awaited the arrival of nightfall before venturing into Enterprise.

Arriving in town, I found fully substantiated every assertion made by the darky track master. I verified the abandonment of the "Victoria Inn." As this was the case with all hotels I had passed in the weed-carpeted streets, the entrance of the inn was boarded up, the windows were festooned with ancient cobwebs and there were other indications that the discouraged owner had posthaste decamped from Florida.

There was no eating place left but a third-rate hotel, the "St. John's House," named after the river flowing nearby. Even this stopping place displayed so numerous signs of poverty in the matter of need of a painting of the structure and extensive repairs, as to provide evidence that even its limited guest capacity more than sufficed to care for occasional transients who strayed to forsaken Enterprise.

At the "St. John's House" I was received in person by the landlord, who inquired as to whether I was a railroader, on having taken due notice of my railroad overalls and the touch of train grime I carried inbedded in my features. I surmised by his question that the hotel man maintained two distinct standards of charges for his patrons. Railroad workers and similar poor fry were asked to pay but one half of the schedule enforced against the general public and, more



especially, the commercial travelers. By personal experience without end, I had learned that this practice was in common use at hotels and restaurants everywhere. Truly, each and every suit of railroad overalls I wore to their discard in the course of years, paid a simply stupendous dividend on their original purchase price, not only in the matter of virtually halving inn and lunchroom charges but also, and even more appreciated, as a dependable disguise and standby whenever I incurred the suspicion of inquisitive strangers, including those connected with the police.

Tempted by the opportunity opened at the direct invitation of the questioning hotel owner, I permitted deception to prevail by acting the part of a railroad employee. The imposition netted a substantial saving in that forthwith I was proffered supper, the lodging of the night and the morning meal on a payment of seventy-five cents. Aware that no further northbound train was due to stop at the junction before noon of the coming day, I accepted the favorable terms.

After supper was served, I lounged in the lobby of the hotel where I felt quite secure against the liability of prying eyes penetrating the secret of my identity. No other guest stopping at the hotel, the landlord, probably divining that his lone patron might desire some sort of entertainment, joined me in a conversation covering general topics. In the course of the discussion I casually remarked that I had visited in Florida in the days preceding the Great Freeze. Obtaining his cue from this comment the hotel proprietor launched away on discussing events connected with the calamity.

Judging from the gist of the stories my host began to relate without brooking interruption, most evidently he had made it a point of personal effort to memorize incidents detailing queer experiences which had



occurred in those dark days of general demoralization. He kept me hugely amused with such odd reminiscences. Finally, exhausting his stock of tales, he asked whether I was in position to report some laughable happening he might properly add to his fund of funny occurrences.

Since the day of the enactment of the "Wild-Goose Chase," staged at the instance of the zealous proprietor of the "Victoria Inn," times without number I had repeated for the entertainment of others the narrative of my adventure at Enterprise. All my auditors had hugely enjoyed the tale but nary a one had behaved more favorably impressed than this seemed to be the case with the owner of the "St. John's House."

The landlord fairly went beside himself and threatened to come to serious harm by his continued salvoes of boisterous laughter which sent him helplessly rolling about in his chair and brought copious tears flowing down his cheeks. And just because my story-telling brought such great satisfaction to my latest listener, I carefully elaborated on that portion of the tale where the citizen of Tavares had referred to the immeasurable disappointment of Ericson on being made the butt of ridicule by those of his fellow-citizens who were present to view the ragged contents of the dilapidated satchel I had discarded at the shore of the pond when I did not care to be encumbered with its weight while I hopped trains.

Most obviously, the hoary maxim, "Early to bed and early to rise," was conscientiously observed at the hotel. Although the night was still young, the hotel man suggested that bed time had arrived. He personally took the trouble to awaken me in the morning. On having breakfasted, I tendered my host the price he had stipulated should be paid for the accommodations I had received. To my utter amazement, he



roughly brushed aside the money, and then thrust into my hand a statement of contents as faithfully reproduced herewith:

5,000-5-98

### THE ONLY HOTEL

Enterprise, Fla., 1 - 3 - 1900

Mr. Lord Warework

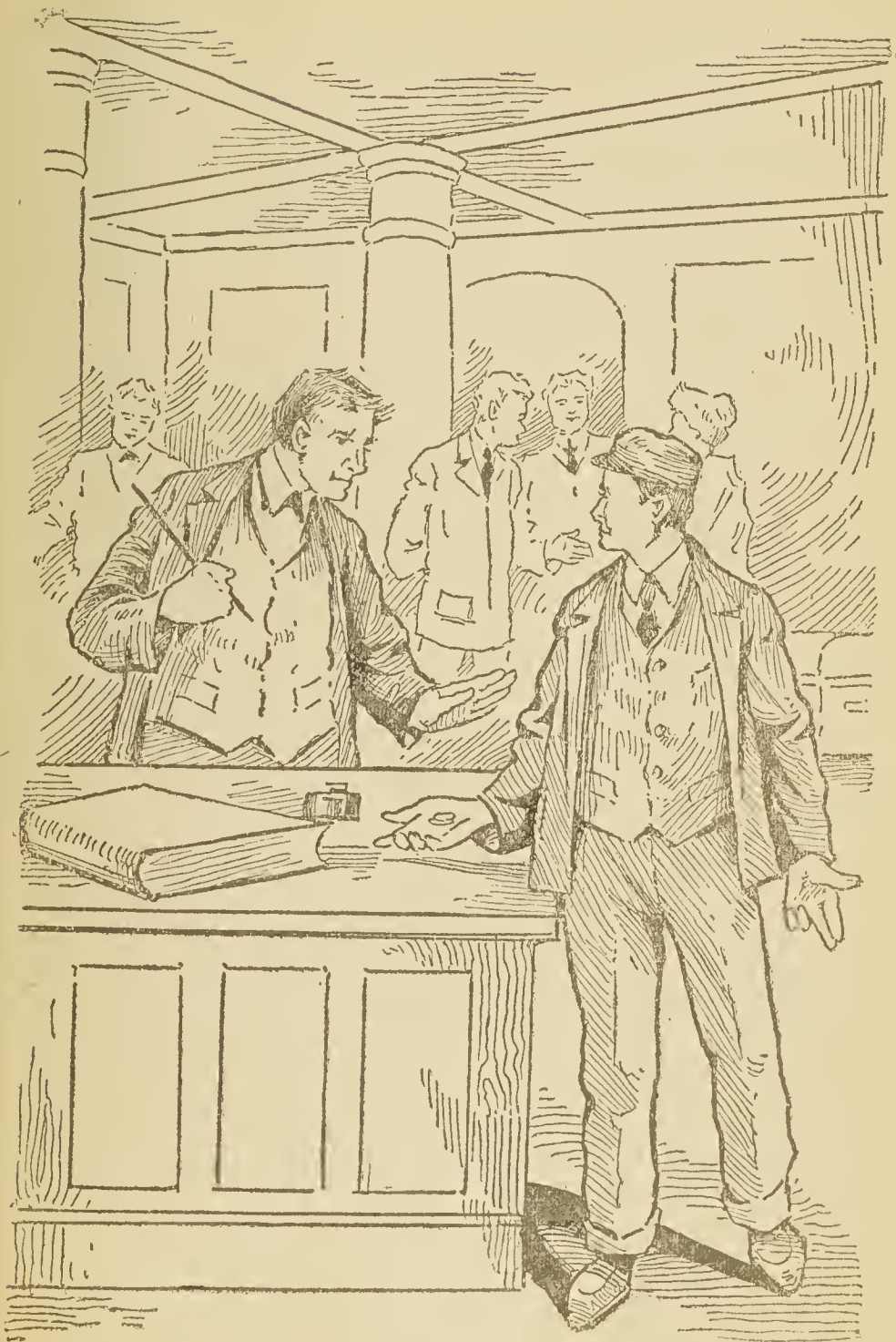
To The St. John's House, Br.

Carl Ericson, Proprietor,  
formerly of the "Victoria Inn."

Room No. 13

			@	\$	¢
1896					
March	22	To 2 darkies, to seining of lake	1.00	2	00
"	"	" Balm to Mis- carriage of Good Inten- tions		10	00
1900					
Jan.	3	" Supper, Bed & Breakfast	1.00	3	00
				\$15	00





The hotel keeper called the score.



The instant I had discerned from the printed inscription on the invoice that the landlord of the "St. John's House" and the erstwhile owner of the now defunct "Victoria Inn" were the self-same character, I threatened to collapse in my tracks as I fully realized how neatly I had trapped myself when on the preceding evening I had regaled the hotel keeper with a ridiculous account of the error that had made him the laughing stock of Enterprise. Obviously, disdaining to follow the example of the other hotel men who had precipitately fled from Florida, Ericson had taken charge of the third-class house, when the patronage of the "Victoria Inn" went dwindling to a point where the revenue obtained proved insufficient to properly finance the larger and, therefore, more expensive venture.

Because of my most unexpected denouement, I was completely struck dumb by the revelation. When, finally, I dared to raise my eyes in the direction of the hotel man, he, glaring malevolently, unflinchingly met my guilty gaze. As a paltry three dollars and divers cents was the total of my available cash, I was in no fettle to meet the amount the innkeeper had decided to assess. But, discerning myself as cornered, I attempted by sheer bluffing to recover that which I had lost by talking too much.

"What of this?" I coolly snarled, pointing at the contents of the bill.

"What of which?" Ericson hurled back in quick fury. "Either pay in full or stand accused of obtaining accommodations on false pretense when you averred you were a bonafide railroader and as such entitled to a reduced rate at this hotel. Your conviction will mean the serving of a long term at hard labor on our county farm over at Deland, where prisoners are handled without gloves."

"Who's going to prescribe such merciless punishment against a harmless wanderer on the flimsy charge brought by you to cater to personal vengeance, sir?" I retorted, while I grinned in defiance at the raging Floridian.

"I happen to be the local magistrate and for this obvious reason placed in position to make better even than merely good on my promise to square in full the practical joke you played at my expense," he thundered with shrieking voice.

"But, sir, I'm lacking all of twelve dollars to satisfy the debt you imposed," I immediately whined in reply, dejectedly, and thoroughly cowed at what I had been told.

"I had to produce the wherewithal to compensate the darkies I hired to drag the pond for your consarned carcass," bellowed he. "Besides, I had to bear up in sore silence when the citizen came over from Tavares and contrived to irritate the old trouble anew by telling how you had crowed and otherwise made light of my charity to assist a stranger I had every reason to believe that he had come to serious grief."

Quick action appeared in order if I desired to save myself from the penalty so closely hanging over my head. Fearing the worst, I humiliate myself on the mercy of my persecutor who, being a squire, carried at his command almost dictatorial powers over such as I. Perceiving no more convenient avenue of escape, I humbly pleaded with the landlord to suggest some means whereby I might obtain the money to liquidate my indebtedness to him.

"As every dollar you raise now will count a reduction in your term by one month, perhaps my colored help might be induced to purchase your suit of railroad overalls which has brought you to your fall," he proposed rather condescendingly.



For the sake of currying favor with my creditor, I unreservedly consented to the sale he suggested, which, as it progressed, was to include several other items of my wearing apparel.

The porter of the hotel acquired possession of the suit of overalls on the payment of two dollars. Not to be foiled in the hunt after bargains the chef insisted on purchasing my coat and vest. Aware that such fancy garments would not be required when attired in the zebra-striped convict outfit I would be diligently tilling the acres of the county farm, I parted with the clothes for six dollars. My pocket knife fetched fifty cents and the cap brought a similar sum. For three dollars to boot, I exchanged my fairly good shoes for a most dilapidated pair of heavy plowman's brogans. With the cash on hand, I settled my account.

Word of what was taking place at the hotel spread like wildfire among the inhabitants of Enterprise. Of the latter, many had been participants in the queer nobleman-hunt. When I emerged from the "St. John's House" I was greeted with such derisive hoots and howls by the mob that had assembled in the street before the hotel entrance that frightened I hurried on my way and continued beyond Enterprise Junction until I had reached a water tank stop. There I remained under cautious cover until after nightfall. Then I hoboed to Jacksonville, where I quit the cars at the city limits. Attired in shirt, badly grimed by the latest hobo trip, trousers and battered boots only, I felt in no proper appearance to be hailed by the police for a questioning to account for my lack of sufficient covering.

But, certainly, my adventure had taught me a hard and fast lesson. Never since have I essayed to play the role of an aristocrat at hotels or, for that matter, anywhere else. Acting the plain, everyday American

citizen, I steered wide of the liability of encounters on the order of that which proved a two-edged boomerang at Enterprise, where, and of this I have no least doubt, to this day Landlord Ericson of the "St. John's House," continues to entertain his patrons with the most laughable one of his vast fund of queer reminiscences of the days of the "Great Freeze,"—a narrative, and I might as well admit candidly this terse fact, I had not found the heart to relate again since I was obliged to "pay the piper."






## CHAPTER II.

### The "C-C & C-C" of Colorado.

---

CCASIONALLY we hear of railroads being overtaken by a fate so tragic and brimming with plots, counter-plots and the various accessories of the standard drama as to prove worthy of further development by a talented playwright. Ordinarily, only when applying for rates and routings at a railroad station, the uninitiated citizen and, especially, the one who resided beyond the regular sphere of service of the rail property affected, became acquainted with the circumstance that some sort of misfortune probably had camped on the trail of a railway. For then, unless absolutely certain of his ground, the depot agent referred for dependable instruction to the contents of the "Official Guide of the Railways." This was a volume of some sixteen hundred closely printed pages and was kept on file in every railroad office in the land. Because of its unusual heft and bulky appearance, the book had been dubbed the "Railroad Bible." The latter not only contained the passenger train schedule of every railroad traversing North and Central America, the sailings of steamboat and steamship lines but also, and this in abbreviated form, the time tables of the more prominent of the electric traction companies. Therefore, the disappearance of the name of any corporation engaged in rail transportation from the index of the "Railroad Bible" might be deemed an almost infallible omen presaging that the particular system either was bodily absorbed by another railroad, had its official title changed by court action or at the request of stockholders, had been disposed of by public

outcry on the auction block or, worst fate, was abandoned as a commercial failure by discouraged owners.

The calamity last to be enumerated, befell the "Canon City & Cripple Creek Railway," which in the heyday of its existence controlled something like forty miles of main-line trackage in the State of Colorado where the line connected the two points from which it had derived its title. The railway afforded the goldfield of the Cripple Creek District, blanketing erstwhile almost inaccessible fastnesses of the foothills of heaven-piercing Pike's Peak, a rail outlet to the world-at-large at Canon City, located at that picturesque spot in the vale of the Arkansas, where the waters of this river tumultuously tumbled from the Rocky Mountains through the towering granite cleft of the Royal Gorge—one of the foremost of the grandest of the scenic wonders of the universe. But instead of the road-bed of the defunct railroad, after having been thoroughly stripped of every valuable item, being calmly relegated to quick destruction by the unkind elements, the right of way of the "C-C & C-C" was converted into a most excellent automobile road that nowadays is flourishing under the name of "The Phantom Canon Highway."

It was while casually scanning the contents of a castaway "Railroad Bible" that I first missed the name of the "C-C & C-C" from the roster of the transportation corporations alphabetically posted in the index. Vaguely surmising that possibly a fate beyond the range of the common had overtaken the mountain railroad, I interested myself to learn further of the finish of the system, for I vividly recalled the incidents of a droll adventure I had there encountered some twenty-five years previously. And I brought to attention the historical items recorded in the preceding paragraph.



Pursuing the inquiry still deeper, I learned that the railroaders who had participated in the action either had been assembled with their forebears or had entered the prosecution of a less strenuous vocation than was railroading. I found occasion to visit with the survivors. On discussing the adventure, I obtained an unabridged consent to publish its details for the amusement of my readers.

Forsooth, every rail line listed in the "Railroad Bible" seemed to maintain a claim to some sort of especial achievement. "No Dust!" advertised the Union Pacific and associated systems with tracks ballasted with "Sherman Gravel" of disintegrated granite. "No Cinders!" proclaimed the "Lackawanna." The "New York Central Lines" boosted their perfectly functioning freight despatch. On the other hand, the "Erie" praised the punctuality of its passenger train service. The "Nickel Plate" boasted of its peerlessly appointed passenger coach equipment, while the "Southern Pacific" claimed the palm for its long-distance trains. And so forth and on right through the pages of the index—every railroad nursed its peculiar renown.

The "Canon City & Cripple Creek" proved no exception to the general rule. Although but a rank railroadlet, the circumstance that no Brother of the Road ever had hoboed a complete trip from terminal to terminal, provided a distinction that at every possible opportunity was flouted by the employees of the "C-C & C-C" to the attention of railroaders manning sister-systems.

I was deposited by the "Denver & Rio Grande" at Canon City, whence I desired to travel to Victor, to visit the other gold camps of the Cripple Creek section. Hoboes, and outsiders as well, had cautioned me in the matter of the serious obstacles a trespasser

would have to surmount to gain passage over the "C-C & C-C." I had made light of these warnings. But on landing in the Canon City railroad yard of the system, my heart leaped in the throat, figuratively speaking, when I caught a first glimpse of the sort of rolling stock in commission on the mountain line. The latter turned out to be a narrow gauge railroad with tracks measuring three feet only between the rails. Where the standard gauge railroads had car and coach equipment of proportions so ample that it proved an easy feat for a Wandering Willie to swing to a berth, more or less comfortable, on trucks, brakebeams and along the gunnels, such rolling stock on a narrow gauge road was of a size so abbreviated that, in fair comparison, they actually looked more like play toys of tots instead of bonafide railroad equipment. The wheels were so small that the bodies of the cars and coaches trailed so close to the ground that not even a dwarf-sized hobo might have crawled to the nether side of the track. The engines were of measurement so scant that neither the cowcatcher nor even the top of the water tender afforded a safe retreat beyond the observation of the crew as this was the case on locomotives plying on all standard gauge lines.

While I was still contemplating on ways to overcome the handicaps I would have to contend against on the "C-C & C-C," a citizen happened along through the yard. I accosted the stranger for information covering the lay of the mountain line. He explained that with the exception of a few widely scattered section houses, homing gangs of track workers, and now and then a station residence, occupied by depot telegraphers, no other human habitation was to be encountered on the right of way until the gold mining country was reached. There was a good reason for the absence of homes and the like. A larger portion of the passage



of the railroad had been bodily blasted from the rock-bound palisades of picturesque Phantom Canon by the daring engineers who had conceived and then constructed this most wonderful bit of railroad building.

But instead the disheartening report of the native proving a sharp deterrent to my projected journey to Cripple Creek, the revelations had quite a different effect. By all means, I decided to tackle hoboing over the "C-C & C-C" so as to avert walking through the canon country where a penniless drifter might feast on truly sublime scenery but where food of whatever character was practically unobtainable.

When in the course of the afternoon a passenger train hauling two miniature coaches and an express-baggage combination car gayly steamed from the Canon City Terminal, I contrived to reach unobserved a seat on the "Blind Baggage." When I had traveled seven miles and while I was fairly jubilating at my good success and began to gain visions of being offered thanks by my fellow-wanderlusts for having smashed the record of the "C-C & C-C," and as the train was approaching Ora Junction, where the Florence branch joined the main line, the conductor of the train stepped to the front platform of the combination car, probably preparatory to registering the time of arrival and departure at the junction stop.

As the railroader espied my presence, his anger instantly mounted to a veritable fury. Without an opportunity to explain matters, I was unceremoniously booted from the coach platform of the moving train. Still, I did not come to harm on the rock ballasted right of way. Actually, I landed upright upon my feet and without even a least of tumbling. For so prodigiously steep was the grade mounted by the railroad that the train proceeded at snail's pace from Canon City, at 5,000 feet above sea level, to Alta Vista, where the

apex of the line was reached at an elevation of, approximately, 10,000 feet.

The passenger train had departed when I walked into Ora Junction. Fair fortune was to favor me, for soon afterward, a freight came snorting uphill from Florence-way. When the train hove into full view, I was to be treated to a surprise in that I counted three heaviest class of mountain climbing engines boosting seven freight cars and the caboose of the train upwards on the unusual grade. Two of the locomotives were coupled on ahead of the cars while the third was pushing with might and main at the stern of the train.

A swift survey of the situation brought a decision on my part to take advantage of the slow progress of the approaching train that would allow an easy hopping aboard of the moving cars anywhere on the grade. I hurried ahead along the track in the direction of Cripple Creek. Even before the freight had reached Ora Junction, I had come to a sharp curve, one of the many that fairly studded the right of way which twisted hither and thither through the granite defile. A large boulder, weighing well into the tons, lying near the outside of the curve, offered an excellent hiding place from the observation of the train crew and the personnel of the three locomotives—a total of eighteen alert eyes I would have to avoid if I hoped to hobo the train successfully.

As the freight drew abreast of where I was waiting under cover, when the front engines had passed my retreat, I made a headlong dash to the side of the cars. Undiscovered, I swung to the bumpers between two box cars coupled adjoining. Balancing myself on the car couplings, I inspected the end doors of the cars and found one of them improperly locked. Pushing the door ajar, I discerned that the cargo consisted of short

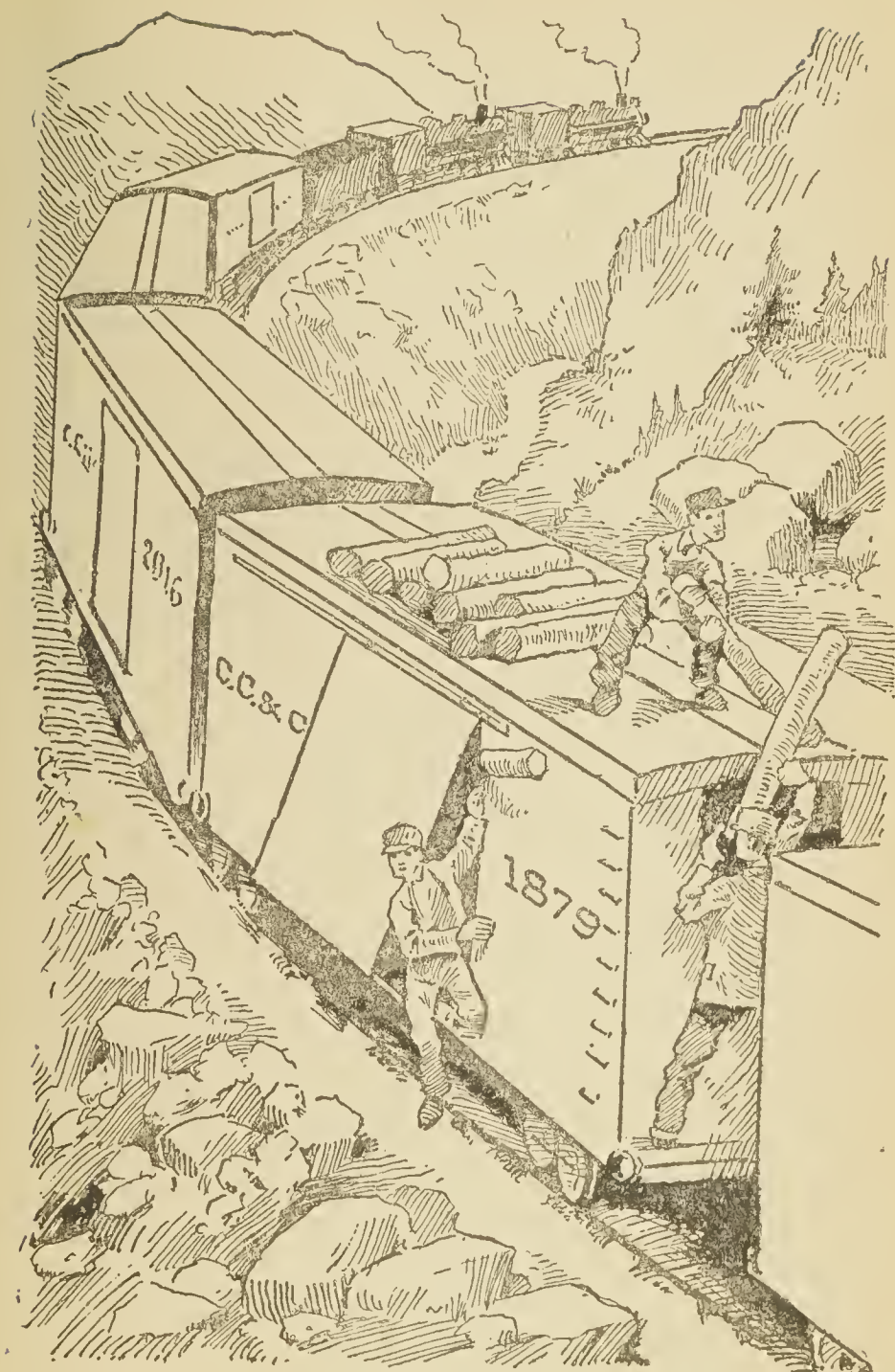


lengths of timber, such as I had seen used as props in mines. Further investigation disclosed sufficient room atop the lumber for a hobo to squeeze within doors. Therefore, I climbed into the car and then carefully barricaded the end door from within with the props so as to avert a ready examination of the interior of the car by some prying member of the train crew. But only too soon I became aware I had failed to reckon with the numerous tunnels driven through the living rock to afford passage to the "C-C & C-C." The two engines pulling on ahead belched forth a most tremendous volume of pitchy smoke. Whenever the train negotiated one of the mountain bores, the noxious gases, entering my throat, brought on volleys of coughing.

That which I feared, was exactly what happened beyond the very next of the tunnels. While I was in the midst of the usual attack of boisterous coughing, a brakeman came walking on an errand over the roof of the cars. His quick attention was immediately drawn by the noise emanating from the car interior underfoot. Trailing the suspicious racket to its source, the railroader encountered the prop-barred end door.

"Come out of this, you fellow!" yelled the train man, infuriated to have met with the unexpected obstruction.

There was no answer, for I reasoned that silence might bring the brakeman to depart in peace without troubling himself further. But I sadly miscalculated the issue, for maddened to the utmost by my defiance, he thundered a repetition of his command, to which, in this instance, he added the threat that should he be compelled to dig me from my retreat, he would regale me to a royal thrashing. Although quaking with fright, I stubbornly refused obedience. Then I heard the railroad employee withdraw one of the mining props



Escaping a sound drubbing.



from the timber bulwark I had erected at the end door. A moment later—and the heavy timber came smashing to the roof of my car, thrown there by the railroader. In rapid succession others of the timbers came crashing down overhead. Before long, I knew myself to be due for the promised sound licking, if not worse.

The impending punishment sent me hustling to obtain protection. Replacing the props withdrawn from the barricade with others from the cargo, I worked like a beaver until I had returned the barrier to its former strength. The faster the railroader toiled, even so I contrived to keep a bit ahead of his task. For quite a term this queer game merrily went on. Then, having ascertained that he was making no gain, the train employee shouted over the car tops, calling his fellow workers to his aid.

Footfalls on the way, and the tenor of several voices soon announced that not only had the train conductor hastened forward to assist his subordinate, and that the other brakeman had arrived at the scene of action, but also that the three firemen of the engines had left their posts of duty to help with the task of dislodging the pesky hobo from his car fort.

Before many minutes I might have been forced to surrender myself to the doubtful mercy of my persecutors if it had not been for the fortunate circumstance that the aperture of end doors in narrow gauge box cars was of such a limited size, that one man at a time only could work with the props. When the contents of the car had dwindled to where one of the side entrances became unobstructed, I tried the side door, to find it so securely fastened from without, that it would not be budged—not even when, actuated by sheer desperation, I threw my weight full against it. I decided to attack the door from another tack. Se-

lecting a prop of rather slender diameter, I wedged the timber into the crack between the door and the side of the car. Then using the fastened prop as a lever, I managed to demolish the cast-iron stays that held the lower section of the door in rigid position. Swinging the door outward from the hangers, I safely dropped to the right of way—at the moment when I saw the brakeman working at the barricade peering across a depression he had made in the piled props.

I had not only gained my freedom but, luckily, had quit the box car while the train was bending a curve and then had landed to the outside of the latter. There the cars, as they passed, shielded me from a direct observation by the train men whom I discerned toiling faster than ever at the props, for, obviously, the railroaders believed their victory to be at hand.

Withal the fortune, I had drifted into still another predicament. I happened to have landed on the same side of the track where the engineer of the pusher engine was seated in the cab of his locomotive. There was no time to spare to search for a hiding place, as but three of the seven freight cars had to pass my station by the track until I would appear in the full view of the engineer of the pusher. Doubtlessly, on discovering my unscathed escape, this fellow might blow the whistle to announce my getaway or, and this most probably, he would stop the train dead on the grade to permit the maddened railroaders to take after me.

A swift decision was in place. To gather my wits, I swung to the front platform of the caboose, where I saw a glass panel let in the door leading into the car. Gazing indoors, I discerned nobody left in charge. Stepping into the car to inspect its lay, I discovered a likely haven of refuge in an empty box seat, such as



did service in the night as pallet for the members of the crew.

Just then, and by purest luck, I chanced to glance from a window. I was horror stricken when I saw how the train men who had been hunting me, were standing strung out alongside the train, preparatory to their swinging aboard the caboose. In an instant I had solved the puzzle—they had discovered my escape from the car.

Pellmell, I squeezed myself into the empty box seat, and scarcely had I slammed its cover shut, than the train men came trooping into the caboose, where they took seats, several of them occupying the cover of the box seat that hid me from view. Assuredly, they were angered to the utmost, as I judged this from the conversation they entered in forthwith and which solely concerned the means I might have employed to disappear so mysteriously from under their hands. As each man held a different opinion in the matter of my escape, soon a heated argument was under way which resulted in the pusher engineer being interviewed to ascertain whether he had seen me left behind. When an unsatisfactory reply was obtained, the conductor ordered the brakemen over the train where they were to drop to the track from the point of the pilot of the first engine. They then were to station themselves one at each side of the passing train to inspect every nook and cranny to see if the onery trespasser had gained another retreat. Soon the train men returned empty-handed from their quest, and when they reported the particulars of their futile search, I could not restrain myself and enjoyed a hearty, though silent laugh at their expense.

For a while everything went well with me, though the box seat afforded but painfully narrow quarters. Then the train passed another tunnel that proved of

greater length than any of the preceding bores. The caboose soon became filled with suffocating coal gases. Then the inevitable was to come, for though I bit my fingers to avert the racket, I broke loose into a furious fit of coughing. Frightened sheer out of their wits, the railroaders hopped high from their seats, as I discerned this by the way of cracks between the poorly fitting boards of the box seat. When the men investigated the source of the wheezing noise emanating from below, they finally discovered my whereabouts.

Although I was roughly handled and dragged from my refuge, the expected penalty failed to materialize on the spot. I found myself favored with a reprieve, because the train employees were anxious to question me so as to satisfy their curiosity as to the means I had employed to quit unobserved the box car. So it seemed, they wished to compare their theories with the actual fact covering my escape, and to learn who of them had come nearest to correctly solving the riddle.

Improving the offered opportunity, I greatly extended my reply by weaving a heart-rending story of woe into my explanation. As a result of this shrewd strategy, the train men overcame every desire to wreak vengeance on my person. My punishment was reduced to an order to vacate the train on the grade. From where I was left behind, it was a brief walk of three miles to Alta Vista, the apex of the grade, whence I followed a short-cut mountain trail to Victor. There I boarded an electric traction car for Cripple Creek and the other points of interest in the gold mining district. Even long before sunset, I had become satiated with the sight-seeing in the section.

As I stopped at a Cripple Creek store to inquire concerning the train time, the shopkeeper on informing me that the "C-C & C-C" despatched an evening train



to Canon City, whispering his further words, continued: "Would you care to earn a handsome reduction on the regular passenger fare, stranger? Four dollars for a trip, at a rate of ten cents the mile, is the straight train charge to Canon City. But I've got a friend who will see you safely through on two-fifty."

Although I had not even a red penny to my name, when I cheerily nodded consent for the sake of hearing the details of the scheme, the store owner explained: "Do not purchase your ticket. Simply enter the last coach in the train and there take a seat, if possible by yourself, near the back end of the car. When the conductor approaches you for your ticket or cash fare, hand him the sum mentioned with a note I shall supply."

As no prepayment or other untoward preliminaries were demanded, I readily consented to abide by the instructions provided for my guidance and, deciding to risk being dumped en route where after nightfall the walking of the remainder of the distance to Canon City would prove more pleasant than during the daylight hours when hunger might become harrassing, I went from the store, taking along the written identification that was to set me at rights with the train conductor.

Even while I marveled how the store proprietor and the crooked railroad employee had arrived at a mutual understanding in the matter of peddling cut-rate transportation on a railway that even then for the dire want of funds was fiercely struggling to keep out of the hands of a receiver, appointed by the courts, a pedestrian caught up with me in the street, whose uniform betrayed him to be a passenger train brakeman on the "C-C & C-C." Because of this, I maintained pace with him to ask if the evening train was due to depart on time.

"That's always the case with every train aboard of which I work as a "rear" brakeman, sir," said the surly fellow, introducing himself as being a "flagman" in the passenger train service.

This casual exchange led to further conversation, in the course of which the railroader heard of my intention to travel to Canon City. Also, that I harbored no scruples to journey at a reduced rate of fare. Would I consider a chance to reach my destination on an outlay of a dollar and fifty cents, though I might be asked to take passage on an exposed coach platform? I informed him that I would be willing to do anything, provided, I would not be brought into collision with the police. Further, and this to forestall all risk of a prepayment being requested, I insisted that there must be no request for a fare settlement until quite a portion of the journey was traveled. He consented to my reservations, and then ordered that I immediately take an electric car for Victor, the first halt made by the evening train. There, I was to climb aboard the "Blind Baggage," he, the flagman, guaranteeing non-interference by the other members of the train crew and the police. Only when the half-way water tank station was reached, was the stipulated fare to be collected by the train porter, the "head" brakeman, who, in the meanwhile, was to be taken in confidence on our deal.

As the brakeman had offered to further reduce by a dollar the low rate posted by his conductor with the tradesman and, still more favorably playing plumb into my hands, was to permit my hoboing in perfect security to the midway stop, I did not have the heart to refuse patronizing the most accommodating chap. A charitable passer-by in the street, advanced my fare by trolley car to Victor. There, as I ran to board the "Blind Baggage" of the departing evening train, I had

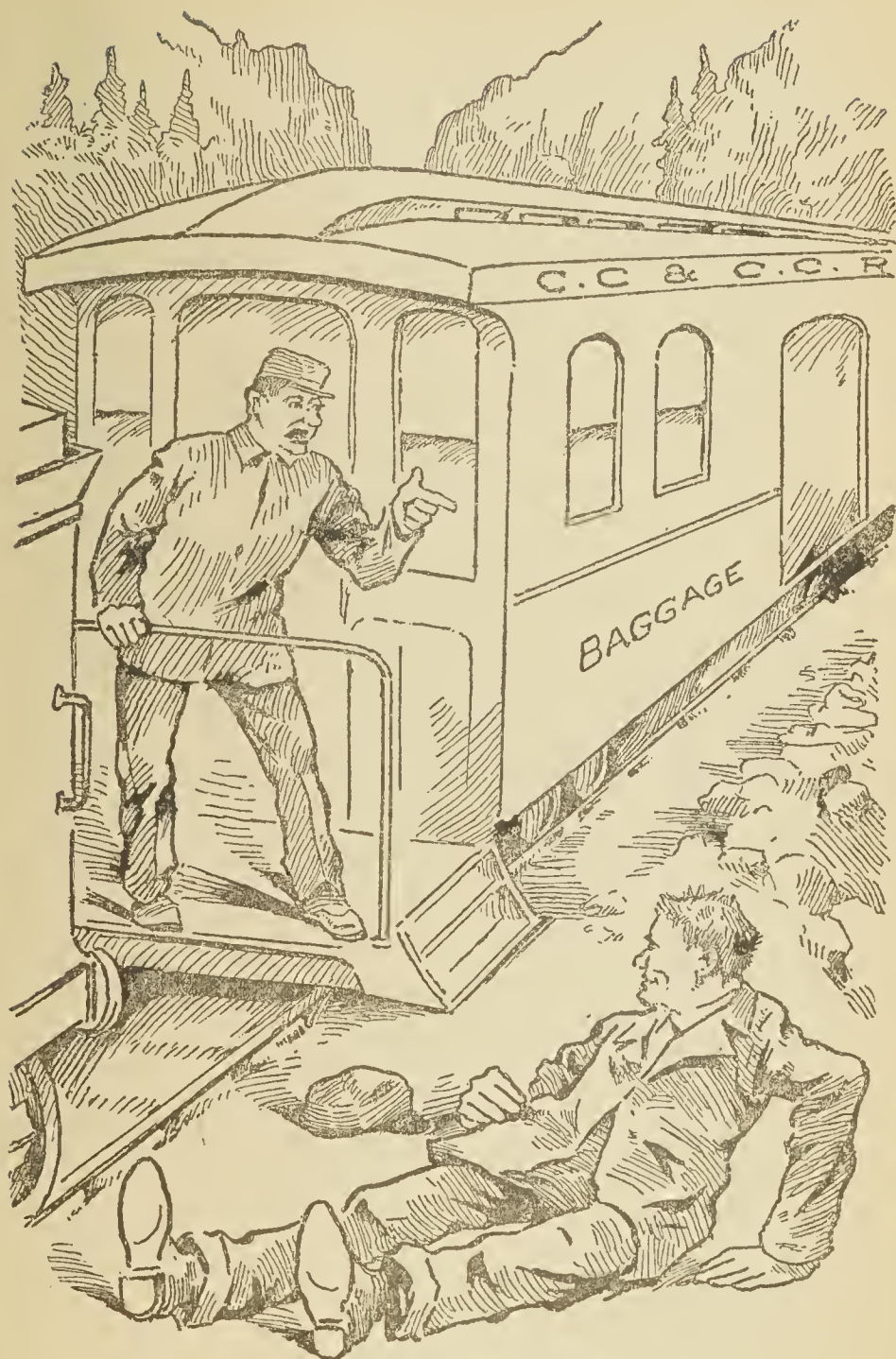


the immense satisfaction to see the head brakeman curiously peering from the nether platform of the combination car, while from the last coach the flagman was watching to be assured that I took proper passage on the car platform to the rear of the water tender of the engine.

All went well—until the engineer whistled for the halfway water station. Then a vagrant gust of wind blew open the coach door leading from the “Blind Baggage” into the combination car. When a train man went forward in the car to shut the door, espying somebody crouching in the darkness outdoors, I was ordered to enter the baggage compartment, which occupied the forward portion of the car. The fellow—he was the baggage master of the train—roughly demanded that I pay him the exact fare from Cripple Creek to the water stop. When I claimed to be without funds, he offered to compromise for a dollar. When I held out, he volunteered to carry me all the way through to Canon City for the same amount. Because I could not meet his cut-throat fare, he chased me from the car and then I was bounced off the platform, while the engineer was jockeying the train for position in front of the spout of the water tank.

As I struck solid soil, I intentionally fell prone to the ground. When the train came to a standstill, I rolled into the shadow of the combination car. While awaiting further developments, I overheard a squabble raging overhead in the baggage compartment. The two brakemen were having it out in great form with the baggage master whose statement that I had declared myself in financial straits, they challenged as an untruth.

Remaining lying close by the side of the outgoing train, I allowed the coaches to roll on the way until the rear platform of the last coach drew along. Boarding



The Baggage Master meant business.



this, I thoroughly enjoyed the rare night scenery unfolding while the train cautiously snaked downhill through the titanic rift of Phantom Canon. Ora Junction was reached and, after the usual registering in and out, was left behind in safety. The arc lights of Canon City had begun to twinkle above the horizon, when something went amiss with the lights glowing in the red lamps glimmering their warning against collision from either end of the rear coach, and then the flagman stepped onto the platform to adjust the trouble. He was almost tripped off the train because of my reclining against the coach side. Instantly he raised the cry of "Hobo," from which, though, he calmed as abruptly on ascertaining the identity of the "dead head" passenger his train had hauled.

"Where's the 'One-Fifty' we came to terms on back in Cripple Creek?" he exploded, and when I undertook to explain my financial disability to complete our contract, he commenced to pare his "private" fare until the amount he named had dwindled to a quarter dollar. When even this pittance was not to be obtained, he wanted to be satisfied with some sort of gift, such as a pocket knife.

In view of the short distance remaining to be traversed to Canon City, I refused to entertain any tribute. This termination of our deal brought the flagman to fly into a veritable fury, and savagely grabbing hold of me by the collar of my overall jacket, he bodily dragged me into the coach, where the conductor of the train happened to be present and to whom the rear brakeman now reported my trespassing.

"Ticket or cash fare, please!" functionally droned the conductor, and as I failed to make good on either part of his official request, he instructed the flagman to hold me in custody for the Canon City police.

Fearing that I was up against a serious session with the authorities, I informed the conductor that I carried for him a note by the storekeeper of Cripple Creek. When the railroader looked at me askance, as if not believing my claim, I drew forth the bit of paper of which I allowed the conductor to have a glimpse of the signature only. But this mere glance proved sufficient, for his heretofore almost haughty demeanor fell, almost magically, to treatment approaching craven civility. Ordering my prompt release from the care of the flagman, the conductor quite cordially invited me to a coach seat somewhat apart from the others occupied by the bonafide passengers traveling in the coach. Forthwith he seated himself at my side and then humbly besought the surrender of the incriminating slip of paper. Visions of what might happen should my method of coming to the town be tipped off to the police officers, always in evidence in railroad terminals at train time, cautioned a careful detention of the message. When, and this despite all his persuasive efforts, he failed to change the plan of action I had laid out for my guidance, the disappointed railroader slunk to where the flagman had stationed himself to await developments. The involved train men presently entered in a conference to discover means wherewith they might disentangle themselves from their dilemma. But their meeting had not continued in the ways of peace for very long, before they went at each other with harsh words, either accusing the other of having effectively queered their most profitable source of left-handed revenue.

Their unreasonable squabbling so irresistibly touched my vein of humor, that, forthwith, I gave vent to my feelings in a volley of laughter. This seemingly unwarranted manifestation brought the terrified conductor leaping to the side of my seat. There he stood as



if transfixed until he had collected his shattered wits to solicitously inquire whether I had determined to call the attention of his superiors to his criminal shortcomings.

Although I completely ignored this query, I desired the grafter to become acquainted with the cause of my merriment. Raising a hand, I began to count on my fingers, so as to keep an exact tab on what I was about to enumerate.

"Back over in Cripple Creek I worsted your friend, the storekeeper, in the matter of his coming in on the 'split' of the cash he believed I would be coming across with in settlement of your cut-rate passenger tariff. Again, neither of your brakemen connected with any share in their crooked enterprise. Once more, your baggage master, too, was left in the lurch in his line of business. You, personally, will quit this deal not only with empty hands but also with a badly seared character. Finally, I smashed to smithereens the vaunted record of the 'C-C & C-C' on the score of being rated hobo-proof," I smiled, speaking so well subdued that my words were audible exclusively to the conductor, who was trembling like an aspen, and then I capped my triumph with a pertinent question: "Now, sir, don't you think this a mighty clever bit of work for a brief hour of hoboing?"

The conductor, visibly writhing in the agonies of his guilt-stricken conscience, did not seem to appreciate the capital joke I had played at his expense, and until the train entered the depot limits of Canon City, he uttered nary a further word. Then he deserted his station by my coach seat, to assist passengers to alight from the car. Following in the wake of the crowd, and while I was in the act of descending from the coach to the station platform, I pressed the evidence of his dishonesty in the palm of the hand the conductor had extended to steady my step. Neither of us

said a blessed word, though the beaming expression that instantly lit up his countenance announced the vast relief he experienced from the immense mental strain under which he had labored all during the soul-racking uncertainty as to whether or not there would come the expected exposure of his graceless offense.

For the sake of gaining some important information in the matter of the westbound train service of the "Denver & Rio Grande," I lingered in the waiting room of the terminal station, where, in another section of the structure, in the meanwhile the conductor, too, was detained by the posting of his train report. It so happened that because of these delays in our departure, we were to meet again within the portal of the depot. Thence we went into the street in company. Considering our recent encounter a closed affair every mention of which was to be tabooed by mutual, though silent, consent, we began to discuss commonplace topics. But soon our speaking commenced to lag through the conductor failing to evince the proper spirit to uphold his end of the conversation. He broke the ban only when we arrived in the street where he had to turn a corner to reach his home, for then the railroader stammered this odd farewell: "Stranger, although I have every reason to suspicion from your demeanor that I am dealing with a professional hobo, in grateful remembrance of the fact that you knew how to keep your counsel on my serious transgression, my wife, our little ones and I shall join in offering up a daily prayer for your welfare. But from this night onward, there will be no further grafting connected with any of my railroading, as you came within a narrowest margin of breaking another record on the 'C-C & C-C'—the reputation for honesty which through all my years of service I had enjoyed in the esteem of my employers, and this deservedly,

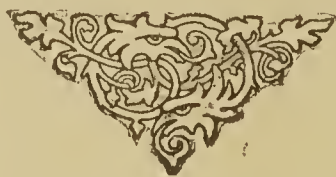


until I went down before the temptation that comes to every mortal soul once in a life-time."

And then without another word, but sobbing aloud as if his heart was breaking beneath its burden of remorse, the conductor wended towards his home—where, doubtlessly, a faithful wife and his kiddies were anxiously awaiting his safe return.

---

**S**TRADDLING the frame of a coach truck beneath a Pullman sleeper coupled in an express train of the "Denver & Rio Grande," I hoboed from Canon City to Salida and over the Tennessee Pass into the land of the Mormons and on and on without breach or letup through my years and years of aimless roving. Continually, and without least thought of the enormous peril, I roughed it unscathed where my fellow roamers paid the penalty of the Road either in a horrible death or, and by far worse, with a life-term of crippled damnation. Innumerable penal institutions, everywhere, with gates ever-yawning to receive their heavy toll of men of the Wanderpath, seemingly were locked against my admission. Truly, and most wonderfully, best of luck and simply miraculous good fortune were my steady lot—ever since the conductor of the "C-C & C-C" passenger train volunteered to redeem in earnest prayer the most peculiar debt of gratitude he had so strangely incurred.



### CHAPTER III.

#### The Samaritan of Mattoon.

---

**I**T happened that the author strayed into the kitchen of our Erie residence while there Mrs. A-No. 1, who proved quite incapable of refusing anyone in need, was provisioning another one of those half-starved hobo kids who occasionally knocked at our gate for provender. Correctly surmising that this youth, who looked as if he still was within his 'teens, was a runaway from home, I undertook to interrogate the wayward on his having strayed onto the Road, a path that inevitably led on to perdition.

In the course of the cross-examination, I wormed from the lad the admission that in the central portion of the state of Illinois he hailed from the small city of Mattoon. Then I took due note how Mrs. A-No. 1 looked askance, while she heard me questioning the boy as to whether or not he was acquainted with a Mrs. Louis Katz, a resident of his home town. On the youngster stating that his parents were on neighborly terms with the lady I had mentioned, I went to the trouble to explain that absolutely nothing but bottomless shame and, more than likely, dishonorable death was to be gained by him should he continue his vagabonding over the land. In this strain of insistent warning I persisted until the thoughtless chap became so homesick-stricken that he willingly accepted my offer to see him provided with a ticket to Mattoon.

On returning from the railroad station, where I had seen the juvenile delinquent aboard his homebound train, I was met by wifey, who sharply reproved: "This is the third young hobo you have sent back to Mattoon at your personal outlay within the course of a



year. More rationally, and serving the same purpose better, you might have wired the relatives of the waywards to meet the expense of the fare, asking this as a least favor. Further, I wish you did tell me who is this woman, the Mrs. Louis Katz, you always refer to whenever you are dealing with runaways from her locality of residence?"

"There is a glorious tale of practical charity towards another wayward, who now is your husband, connected with my returning these youths to Mattoon, my dear," I assured Mrs. A-No. 1, who immediately pleaded that I state the particulars of the adventure.

---

THE main-line arteries of two important trunk railways crossed at Mattoon. Running east and west was the "Big Four Route," while the "Illinois Central Railroad" connected northern points with southern destinations. All trains of either transportation system scored a lengthy halt at Mattoon because there the railroad mentioned first maintained a division point, while the Illinois Central had to transfer freight and passenger traffic here for points on a tap line leading towards Southern Indiana.

Both main lines were double-tracked to care for an enormous volume of traffic. The latter not only comprised the regular freight and passenger offerings but also, and forsooth, Wandering Willies in veritable hordes. With the probable exception of the armies of hoboes traveling over the "Lake Shore" division of the New York Central, and the Chicago-St. Louis route of Chicago & Alton and the Chicago-Kansas City line of the Santa Fe, no two other railroads were plagued with tramps like the two systems crossing at Mattoon.

There was a shrewd calculation of opportunities underlying this highly undesirable tramp patronage. In

the days of the beginning of this adventure, the chance of a hobo being arrested for trespassing on the "Big Four Route" stood something like one hundred and seven times in the favor of the ride thief escaping punishment for his dangerous practice. This ratio was reached by multiplying 535, the mileage between Cleveland and St. Louis, by 2, the count of the tracks of the double tracked main-line, and again by 20, the average run of daily trains, and then dividing 21,400, the product obtained, by 200, a numeral representing the actual track mileage patrolled by each officer in the employ of the railway's police department, each man being assigned to guard one hundred miles of the main line. On the Illinois Central the show of avoiding legal complications proved no less propitious for the train rider. There 363, the distance of the Chicago-Cairo line, was multiplied by 2, the double trackage, and again by 35, the average despatch of trains each day, and then by dividing 25,410 by 100, as each special agent had charge of fifty miles of the main line, giving a ratio of two hundred and fifty-four times in the interest of the law-defying tramp avoiding deserved penalty at the hand of man.

(In this day, May, 1921, the hazard of the train bummer being brought to justice had become reversed by reason of the far greater number of railroad officers nowadays engaged in the relentless persecution of this particular class of transgressors.)

While both corporations manfully battled against the ever-growing pest—in the main consisting of vagrant criminals capable of enacting offences ranging from the annoying misdeeds of the petty pilferers to the gory acts committed by actual and potential murderers, the citizens of Mattoon went not without reminders of the two-legged plague. This trouble could not well have been avoided, when every train



brought to town a flock of more or less starved beggars who like a cloud descended on the residence districts.

With years on years of this ceaseless "battering" of the private homes going on day in and day out, Sundays included, from long before break of dawn until, not infrequently, after midnight, the Mattooners had arrived at that point of human endurance where in the matter of dispensing charity their patience had come to that frazzled edge where there was no response given to any knocking at the gate or the other more or less devious devices of panhandling resorted to by the resourceful bummers of the Road.

So it came to pass, that in the time of my wander-lusting, trampdom rather freely conceded that of all the "bum-sick" communities, with every certainty, Mattoon was one of the "hungriest" in the lot. The campfire tales told in this regard fully substantiated this contention. It was a most commonplace occurrence to hear of bets being freely placed and invariably lost by mendicants of long experience who had proven themselves incapable of herding even a skimpiest handout in all the burg. Furthermore, the outcome of numerous encounters between vagabonds and members of the Mattoon police force quite sufficiently verified the assertion of local citizens that only officers were taken on who were qualified to swiftly maze into meek submission the surly among the generally physically perfect, though indescribably degenerate transients whose sole occupation consisted of sponging an existence that, most likely, would have proven unacceptable to creatures as low in the station of life as the mangy cur dog.

And into this fiercely hobo-hostile Mattoon I, then but a youth, drifted by train. On tackling the residences, to my vast sorrow I was all too quickly to learn that the tales of the hoboes were not exaggerated by



Mattoon of Illinois was hobo-proof.



an iota. After my all-day trip on the cars of a fast freight, there was not to be had any response whatever to my humble knocking for provender. Forsooth, I duly observed that in no other panhandle-proof community I had met with so many garden gates and fence posts so thoroughly overscribbled with the chalked sign of the circle quartered with a cross—the ominous mark of trampdom which heralded reliable intelligence where marble-hearted folks resided.

In the end, sheer stubborn perseverance went rewarded. The mistress of a stately manor allowed herself to linger through my explanations, how I—as usually passing himself as a trade apprentice engaged in a bonafide search of employment—had unawares reached the strait where I was compelled to rely for aid on the charity of the community.

“I’ve raised four sons, and as there’s no telling but that some day one or the other of my lads might be caught in your present predicament,” the lady announced sweetly, “and, though, it’s quite contrary to a mutual understanding among our local housewives never to further vagrancy by the provisioning of transients calling at the back doors of our residences, I shall dare stretch a point in your favor as my mother’s heart goes out to you, a mere boy.”

Then the good lady retired into her house, whence, before long, I took my leave rejoicing as I carried on my journey a large paper pouch filled with such edibles as might be best appreciated by a famished wayward. As for obvious cause I disliked to remain in town to court another heartbreaking handout foraging expedition I departed from Mattoon aboard the first train leaving in the direction of my destination of the moment. In the run of the life of *the Road*, I soon had forgotten the kind soul who had lent a helping hand where her co-residents had become sensible to

the terse fact that relief, indiscriminately extended to the stranger at the gate merely, nay, fearfully, encouraged the curse of professional mendicancy.

Some years went by—then I came railroading another time into Mattoon. Tighter fisted than ever before, affairs stood worse for the panhandlers. Even my persistent efforts sorrily failed to boost the interest of the housewives to where they might come across with food. It was then that in my sheer extremity I chanced to recall the incidents of my preceding trip in quest of grub in Mattoon. This remembrance brought on an idea that in all probability the woman who fed me on that day might not likely recognize in me her former caller. I had not only arrived at man's estate but with the coming of age, I had permitted a mustache to adorn my upper lip after a fashion. Banking on this and other differences in my personal and general appearance, I bravely went to the house of the good lady who had acted so mercifully before.

Fortune seemed to favor my errand as the lady quite failed to recognize in my person the fellow by whom she had been fooled previously. Then I recited a tale of sad tribulations which perfectly fitted with her mental estate, that I knew to be forever occupied with the devolving of plans conceived in a boundless mother love to see unlimited success in life come to her sons. The plausible yarn, hatched on the spur of the moment, struck home as thoroughly as I had expected it should. The woman entirely forgot the anti-hobo obligation to her fellow housewives, a covenant still strictly being adhered to by all the town, as I had learned to my sorrow. When I concluded my story of woe, she requested that I step into her kitchen, so she might prepare a substantial meal.

Obeying her instructions, I was then given a chair



while my hostess busied herself with the assembling of my repast. But soon I had ample cause to rue the colossal audacity which had impelled my return to this particular residence, for the lady of the house forthwith began to send at my person searching glances from out the corners of her eyes. Obviously, there had come to her mind a vague suspicion that all was not well with her tramp guest. I tried coolly to dismiss her untoward attention as a demeanor of innocent curiosity. When she continued her tactics, I decided to rebuke her by acting the role of a total stranger. But soon this defensive measure was proven to be of no worth, for my guilt-burdened conscience brought me to the pass where I would not lift my gaze from the floor of the kitchen. This damaging auto-confession had the quick effect to conclusively confirm the belief of my hostess that she was dealing with a rank impostor on her charity. When she had arrived at the point of righteous indignation where she could no longer contain her anger, she blurted: "Aren't you the same chap who stopped at my house some years ago and then bound on the identical kind of errand as this is yours on the present evening?"

"You're positively mistaken, marm," I bravely countered, though my reply was thoroughly vitiated by the crimson blush of the deliberate lie that instantly came sweeping into my countenance.

"I happen to be one of the favored mortals endowed with the faculty of remembering for the longest the features of persons previously met," she announced for my information. "I must insist to have your truthful version of what has brought you here to-night with a different story to excuse your practice of professional beggary."

This order was enunciated with such an explicit tone of command, that I was given no loophole for a fur-

ther subterfuge to prevail. Although virtually driven to bay, I resorted to hemming and hawing and pouting and blustering to avoid the trying ordeal she had demanded. Failing to move me to an immediate admission of my guilt the lady diplomatically changed her tart measure of obtaining my self-denunciation to where she actually pleaded for permission to enter in my complete confidence. Soon her repeated, unselfish appeals carried me where I could no longer muster the extreme courage that was required to further refuse a complete airing of the supreme fault that had driven me roving without lien and letup up and down the wide world.

"I know, and my heart tells me this, that somewhere there is a to-be-pitied mother praying for the safe return of you, her wayward son," she rasped half-choked with genuine compassion at the amazing review of my sordid career I had furnished her.

Then she elected to treat me to a merciless lecture on my wrong-doing and though outwardly I received the scathing arraignment in apparently callous indifference, inwardly it seemed as if for this momentous purpose common terrestrial distances had been instantaneously abrogated to where the souls of the two mothers—she, who was bending over me where I was sitting cowering in the kitchen chair, and the other, the suffering mother of mine—had become miraculously cemented into one inseparable unit which now gave vent to pangs of infinite woe in the scorching reprimand welling from the lips of the Samaritan of Mattoon.

When finally the lady had exhausted her power of admonition, I meekly told how times innumerable I had manfully striven, though unsuccessfully, to divorce myself from the Road. Leaving matters resting on merits, in the goodness of her heart, the woman



exacted a pledge that whenever my route of hoboing lay by Mattoon, I would call at her residence. Only when I had agreed in full faith to comply with this unheard-of invitation to a human derelict, was I provided with the meal which, almost providentially, had brought me to her mansion. On taking my leave, I was presented with an acceptable assortment of wear selected from the wardrobe of the four sons of the mistress of the house, and a dollar on my way, while she feelingly remarked: "That which I have done for you this day, my boy, most assuredly in spirit was donated by your unfortunate mother."

On arriving in the street, I ascertained of passing citizens that the name of my benefactress was Mrs. Louis Katz.

While engaged on another journey through Mattoon I fulfilled the promise of the preceding trip. When I was admitted to her residence, good Mrs. Katz furnished a most bounteous meal, some garments discarded by her sons, another small sum of money and, at the minute of my departure, a letter. I was astonished to the limit, to see that the address of the letter bore my correct name—which latter I had ever endeavored to shield as a sacred secret from the world-at-large, which custom was about the only redeeming feature practiced by the hoboes. To still further nettles my surprise, the post office cancellation mark showed the missive to have been mailed at San Francisco, the city of my birth.

When I searched the countenance of my hostess for information explaining the presence of the strange letter, she cheerily confessed that she had taken a fair advantage of a casual remark I had dropped on my preceding visit to Mattoon. Engaging the service of a renowned detective agency with office in San Francisco, this concern had ordered its astute operatives to

apply the lead I had inadvertently furnished to stage a thorough canvass of the residence districts of that city. The sleuths had soon annotated all homes where sons were reported as missing the approximate term of years I had mentioned to Mrs. Katz as having been fettered to the Road. By the usual process of elimination of unproductive leads, finally, my benefactress in faraway Illinois was placed in communication with my people. As an outcome of the ensuing correspondence, the letter I now beheld was forwarded in the care of Mrs. Katz. It was the first word, in writing or otherwise, I had received from home, as with a truly boyish thoughtlessness I had resigned myself to the belief that by conscientiously abstaining from communicating with my folks, the latter would be saved from a still further aggravation of their great sorrow.

The contents of the letter proved to be a most soul-rending plea of a thoroughly broken-hearted mother that her boy, her only child, at that, might reform from his dreadful error and disgrace. When I had finished with the reading of the missive, Mrs. Katz, by employing an infinite tact to obtain her laudable object, gained her wish in the matter of having me pen, then and there in her presence, a letter in reply to the lines from home, as she insisted that she desired to personally attend to its proper posting in the mails.

In the course of the years which followed, I oftentimes called at the house of Mrs. Louis Katz. This journeying to Mattoon soon mounted to an obligation I deemed on par with the sacred pilgrimage executed by orthodox Mohammedans to their holy Mecca and Medina. There always was a letter or two awaiting my arrival. Then came the sad day when mother wrote that father had gone to his eternal reward. Soon after this bereavement, there were to be no further pitiful entreaties by mother dear, for I received a brief notifica-



tion by the attorney of our family announcing her demise. Thus forever terminated was the exquisite martyrdom she had suffered all her living days—as this was the undeserved penalty which befell so many other good parents whose sons were allowed to hobo by the police everywhere, until they were hopelessly ensnared in the toils of the Road, the veritable abyss of the Social Pit.

In accordance with a consent I had previously recorded over my signature, my parental estate was distributed among public charities worthy of support. The funds concerned in this division amounted to but a merest fraction of the original fortune, as vast sums were expended on a ceaseless search instituted by my parents in their anxiety to gain even a least trace of the wayward who so heartlessly had blasted their enjoyment of life. AND LET THIS, MY SELF-ARRAIGNMENT BECOME AN EVERLASTING WARNING TO OTHER THOUGHTLESS YOUTHS BEFORE THEY, TOO, HAVE SPOILED THEIR FUTURE AND THAT OF THEIR TO-BE-PITIED PARENTS THEY HAD COME TO HONOR AND OBEY AND NOT TO DISGRACE.

I retained the steadfast friendship of Mrs. Louis Katz, who, as ever, offered an asylum whenever my route of roughing led through hobo-hostile Mattoon. Then approached the hour when the best girl on earth, almost divinely heroic in her self-sacrifice, released me, her husband—from the yoke of the Wanderpath. But even to this day, when to me, personally, my checkered past seemed to have assumed the station of an ugly nightmare, I occasionally have a letter by Mrs. Louis Katz, whom I shall always hold in gratitude so profound as to be entirely beyond the scope of expressing its unbounded dimensions in mere words.

---

## CHAPTER IV.

### As the Voice from the Tomb.

---

**H**OW would you, dear reader, act affected on the uncanny receipt of a letter penned by a person you had believed dead and buried all of thirty long years? Again, might even the most virile of talented imaginations construe and then understandingly describe the state of your personal emotions when, additionally, the writer of such an unusual missive was largely responsible that for more than a quarter century you were condemned to lead the cursed existence which is that of the devotee of the Road?

It was just such an ultra-strange occurrence which recently befell your author, who in his initial literary production, "Life and Adventures of A-No. 1," explained how he, then a youngster in knee breeches, was induced by yarns of "Rock Candy Mountains" and other threadbare fables exciting youthful irresponsibility, to become the "Road Kid" of "New Orleans Frenchy." This character professionally was both tramp and criminal. In the latter classification he was affiliated with that most dangerous viper in human guise prowling in the dead of the night—the burglar.

Faithfully recording my experiences with this genius of evil, I concluded with our leave-taking at Pensacola. This was in the eighteen-eighties. Since then I had neither a word by Frenchy nor had ever again encountered his moniker. Therefore, I had every occasion to place complete credence in the plausible report



circulating among the wandering fraternity to the effect that my erstwhile tutor in the ways of wrongdoing had finally met with a natural death while undergoing life imprisonment in the state penitentiary of Michigan.

Considering the mentions foregoing, the reader should all the better appreciate the immensity of my amazement when there arrived a memorandum of inquiry in the writing and over the signature of my hobbing mate of long-ago, whose very existence I had quite forgotten. In answer to my reply, there soon ensued a lively interchange of correspondence pregnant with personal confidences. In due time our letter-writing had progressed to the point where my former mentor wrote so exceedingly interesting on his career subsequent to our parting of ways in Florida, that I obtained his permission to accord publicity to the more entertaining passages in his letters.

Forsooth, the reader should considerately abstain from forming a hasty judgment in the matter of the propriety of publishing the unvarnished revelations rendered by Frenchy while telling of his personal exploits, for the sender of the correspondence not only reformed from his crooked ways many years ago, but also is rated a highly respectable citizen in his present place of residence.

Rather, an unbiased study of the almost incredible iniquities exposed by Frenchy might prove of serious and absorbing concern to every reputable citizen. For thus the latter will be placed on proper guard and self-protection against being likewise mulcted in simply prodigious sums which, more or less submerged in the schemes of indirect taxation, after all, must be met by innocent folks.

## THE FIRST LETTER

---

### Scouting by Mail

---

San Diego, Cal., December 7, 1919.

The A-No. 1 Publishing Company,  
Erie, Pa.

Sirs:—

Kindly inform the undersigned of a means to open communication with the author of the "A-No. 1 Tramlife Series," as I have important matters to call to his personal attention.

Yours truly,

RAOUL VOLEUR.

No. 335 Spencer Avenue.



## THE SECOND LETTER

---

### From the Past to the Present

---

San Diego, Cal., Dec. 16, 1919.

Dear Pal of Thirty Years ago:—

To-day received your answer to my recent letter of inquiry, introducing you as the sole owner of the firm publishing your literary productions. In response to your request for particulars, I shall explain what it was that had moved me to obtain your address.

I am married and, at that, most happily. One child, a daughter, came to bless our home. The girl is approaching her seventeenth birthday and will graduate from high school during the ensuing year. It was three weeks ago that Doris was reading a book which, as this was her wont, she had loaned at the library maintained in her school. While I was scanning over the contents of the local evening daily, I heard her casually remark: "Oh, Papa! This certainly is some interesting story which seems to have been written by a person who traveled quite as extensively as you have."

When my daughter left the room, she allowed the book to remain on the table, inviting an inspection of its text. By the title, I ascertained that its author was "A-No. 1," whose books had attained national popularity by the sheer oddity of their contents. Reaching for the volume, I allowed myself to finger through its pages, when my attention was attracted by the headline of the chapter, "In Partnership with a Burglar." The description of your initial ride astride a wobbly brakebeam, caused me to become thoroughly interested. When I read about that laughable episode

at Rosenberg Junction in Texas, where you and your comrade lugged off a trunk heavy with farm seed brought in by immigrants, I truly began to marvel. But when I hurried through your tale of the Christmas adventure at Pensacola, it required no further enlightenment to have me comprehend that I was reading an experience which I vividly recalled to have lived through in the course of my own existence, though the affair was faithfully chronicled by some one else. Putting two and two together, and remembering the fact that once upon a time I had the company of a "Road Kid" whom I had nicknamed "A-No. 1 Kid," because acceptable predicates singled him out from the common run of vagranting lads, I surmised, as this was to prove to be a correct guess, that this youth and the author of the book were one and the same party. This induced me to write for your address and to-day—bringing a most surprising climax—by way of the federal mail service, I am holding a joyous reunion with my former apprentice of the Road, to whom throughout all these years, I had not even paid a fleeting thought.

As you might demand a more conclusive evidence carrying every assurance that indeed you are dealing with the proper person, I desire to refer you to that dark night at the railroad bridge spanning the black chasm of a deep arroyo on the Southern Pacific a short distance only west of the city of San Antonio. There the sills of the track crossing the bridge had been placed so far apart that, tot that you were, you became quite panic-stricken at the thought of the risk of slipping through the widely spaced railroad ties to a watery grave in the creek below. Do you recollect how I solved the trouble by carrying you riding astride my back over the bridge?

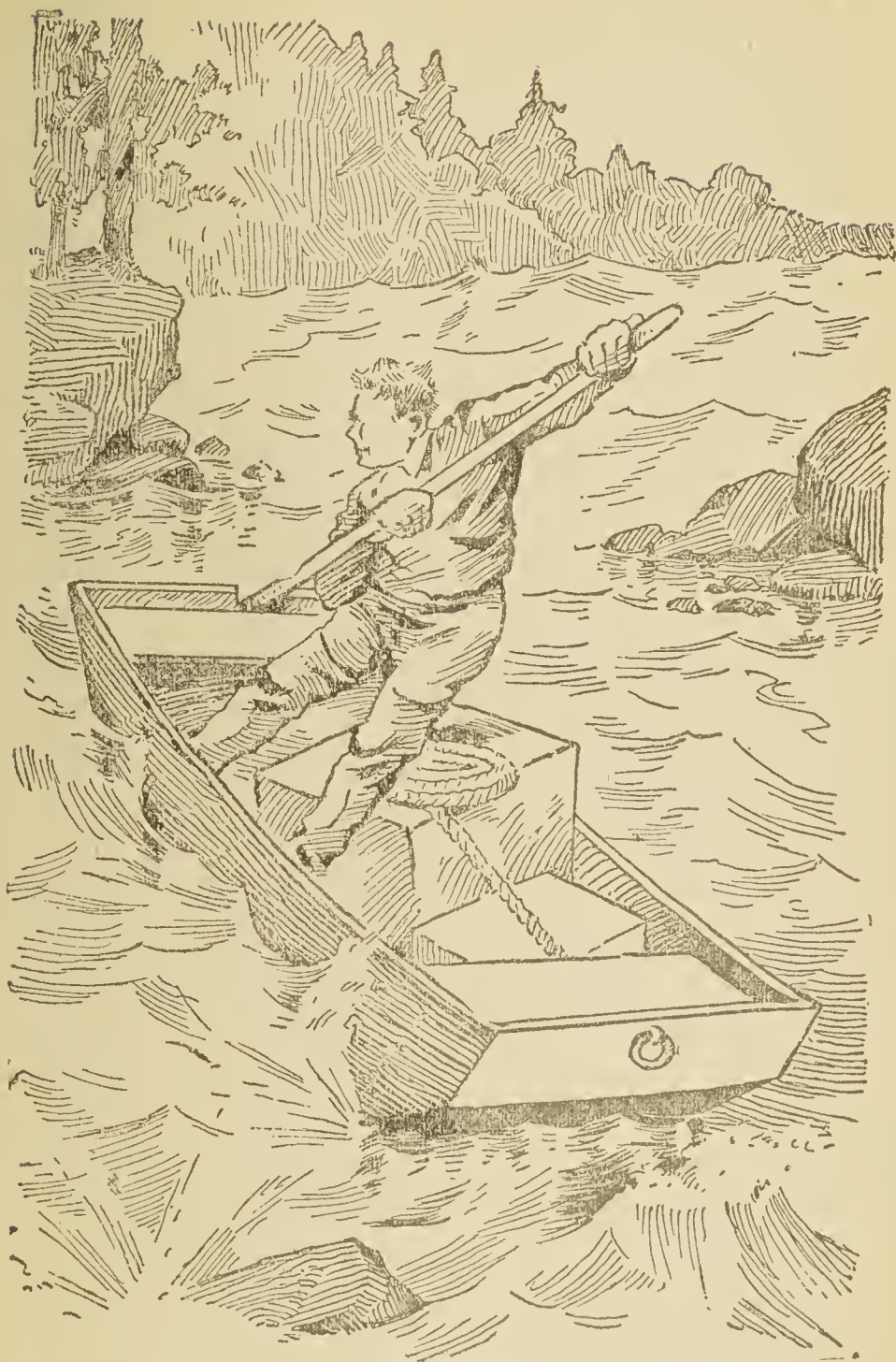
I, too, have been moving since Pensacola. There I



managed to stage a clean getaway with the treasure chest of the sailing vessel aboard of which Sailor Boss Davis, the mulatto, had bound me out as ship's cook. I trailed your moniker along the "Florida Central & Peninsular Railroad" to Orlando. I saw it last at Kissimmee, although I went searching all the way southward as far as Tampa and then doubled back on the road to Jacksonville. Abandoning my futile search, I took stowaway passage to New York City, hence I went a-roaming.

In 1889, I shipped from Seattle to Skagway in Alaska, where the Klondyke gold rush was at its height. From the coast, I "mushed" inland to Lake Lebarge, where I constructed a flat-bottomed boat, which I navigated down the turbulent Yukon to Dawson. Lingering here a while to catch my bearings in the strange Northland, I joined in a stark-mad midwinter stampede to gold discoveries in the Porcupine District. To reach this destination proved a feat worthy of the mettle of any red-blooded man. I tramped some two hundred miles through the deep snows and eternal night common to the winter of the desolated country within the Arctic Circle where at that particular season of the year the mercury in the thermometer continually hovered about fifty degrees below freezing.

Now mind you—I had quit Skagway with something like one hundred pounds of provisions strapped to my back. An even year later on I came returning to this port leading to the icebound domain of the savage North King, with exactly an even hundred pounds in dead weight of virgin gold in my money belt. Every pennyweight of this considerable fortune in precious metal was earned by honest endeavor on my part. During that most memorable winter in the Arctic section, all the argonauts marooned there were compelled to battle with death from starvation because of a short-



Boating the turbulent Yukon.



age of provender. Strong men died like poisoned flies—until with the re-opening of river navigation fresh provisions could be sent in for the relief of those who had lived through the terrible ordeal, where coarse grub had become so valuable a substance that for the time being the gold that had drawn the fortune hunters to the silent North Country lost every value.

Prior to my second trip into Skagway, I had always considered the paying for transportation in the estimate of an unpardonable sin. By the dangerous "Brakebeam Route" I had crisscrossed the Americas by every rail line available, even including the vaunted Panama Railroad. Common occurrences for me were stowaway passages on steamers plying the Seven Seas. On all these journeys I was amply supplied with financial funds. It was pure cussedness that had me refuse to purchase the tickets required, for it was an ordinary happening for me to carry as high as five hundred dollars "planted" in my apparel.

But with the cashing in of the many thousands of dollars' worth of gold I had brought out of Alaska, there came to me a most decided change in the point of view I had heretofore taken of my manner of traveling. Honestly and sincerely, I candidly believe that since Alaska I have paid out more for actual cash fares by rail and water and otherwise, that this easily totals up the sum of which I had previously trimmed the public carriers.

Departing from Skagway by first-cabin passage to Seattle, thence I traveled by Pullman to New York. Really, I rode planked down in a softly plushed seat and did my level best to behave like a genuine multimillionaire. Truly, it did me a world of good to see how the colored Pullman porters hopped about to grab the tips I had to bestow for any service rendered. From New York City I crossed the Atlantic on the

"St. Louis" bent on a tour of Europe. Once across, I had a change of mind, when I decided that San Francisco would prove an acceptable locality for my permanent residence. Therefore, I re-crossed aboard the "Savoie" of the French Line. Reaching shore, I continued by rail via Montreal and the "Imperial Limited" of the Canadian Pacific Railway, to transfer at Vancouver by coastwise steamship for San Francisco. The next journey oversea was made on the "Kroonland" of the Red Star Service and on the return trip I boarded a palatial boat of the Holland-American company.

All these trips and ever so many others were scored in the first cabin—by me who but some twenty years before had come to America in the steerage of a French freighter.

Landing from my first Alaska-France voyage at Cherbourg, I took unto myself as wife a winsome lass of but sixteen summers. Being a stranger in France, and, probably, of a somewhat bashful disposition, I had recourse to a matrimonial bureau that published a pamphlet for the express purpose of placing marriage within the ready reach of parties interested. On the very first day of its publication, my advertisement netted fifty-six replies. The girl I choose was employed at overcasting button holes at a dressmaker's, where she earned not above ten cents daily working fourteen long hours. She wore wooden clogs and cared not for hat covering. She promised to be faithful to her vow of marriage she conferred on a total stranger offering her an American home and fireside and, connectedly, a release from the miserable station of a European slave of industry. I togged her out in great style and then went sightseeing through Europe. In the end, we drifted across to California, where we settled to raise our daughter, who I mentioned as being the



original cause of our meeting again, though by correspondence, after all these years and years.

While I am in the mood of confessing, let me say, that I am exceedingly sorry to admit that since Pensacola, I was compelled to serve another brief "jolt" in San Quentin, which is the official location of the state penitentiary of California.

The first time I came away from this penal institution, I was a "cadet" of crime and on the following instance, an event that happened some twenty years ago, I had gained such a thorough acquaintance with the workings of the ways of the underworld, that I blossomed forth immediately after my release—please, try to guess the vocation I am about to mention—as a bonafide member of the police department of the city of San Francisco. Can you beat this for a most contrary transfer which sent me from the cell of the felon right smack to the task of the legal upholder of the mandates of Law and Order?

Some fifteen years preceding the penning of this letter of to-day, having gained a nice nest egg against the proverbial rainy day, on wearying of lounging about our home, I repaired to the office of Chief Special Agent C. C. Crowley, at that period the head of the police force maintained by the Southern Pacific Railroad. I weighed two hundred pounds and was in ship-shape to tackle anything going. Crowley, as his name proclaimed, was an Irishman. As were so many police officials of that particular descent, he preferred his countrymen for subordinates in the police service he commanded. The first item on the way, Crowley commenced a quiz to ascertain the country of my nativity. Certainly, I was in dandy position to meet his every expectation. Although being a thoroughbred Frenchman, the fact that I happened to be of pure Norman blood, gave me the appearance of a person of Celtic

origin far more than that commonly accepted for the man of the general French type. Besides, I had had several months of hoboing in the Emerald Isle. There, and this of necessity in the matter of getting a fill of food, I had gained the peculiar twang connected by the Irish people with their version of the English tongue. My thorough ability to use the rich brogue of the English dialect adopted by the Sons of Erin, came in good stead on this occasion in San Francisco. Evidently, Chief Crowley, though probably privately, had placed the circumstance of men applying for positions under him being of his own nativity above every other regular qualification, for only when well satisfied on this score, he asked to hear what, if anything, I knew of railroading and the pursuit of criminals. I acted most innocent of such education and expressed willingness to be taught by him, personally. But while I averred ignorance on both particulars, I had the time of my life, even biting my lips so these bled profusely, to restrain my emotions which urged me on to shout full in Crowley's face, that what I did not know of the two knowledges he had referred to was not worth while studying by any sleuth.

The interview concluded with my being awarded the position of a patrolman with the Southern Pacific. The ceremony of being sworn in as a depuy sheriff of California followed. Then I was handed a revolver with almost cannon-like calibre of bore, the star of my office, a hefty mace and, finally, a railroad pass that permitted my scotfree traveling aboard any train of the railroad, which, forsooth, heretofore I had hoboed more freely and frequently than I had dared any other route in the land.

My initial assignment was to patrol the police division reaching from Tracy to Bakersfield. The order

called for my "mixing" with the hoboes for the sake of gathering information covering their "touching" the contents of freight cars and the perpetration of other depredations. I was told to obtain plenty of pistol practice by perforating all stew tins and pans I encountered on hand at temporarily abandoned hobo camping grounds.

Even before his having actually inducted me into my new position, Chief Crowley had warned that there must be no grafting whatever in the service under the penalty of an instant and dishonorable dismissal from the police force over which he lorded it with a high hand and, most likely, a subsequent prosecution in the courts to the limit permissible under the law. This tart injunction was strictly lived up to until the day I "pinched" a gent I had discovered bumming his way on the "Owl," the fast San Francisco-Los Angeles night express. On the way to the city calaboose at Modesto, the fellow offered one hundred dollars cash for his release from custody. Then I was monthly earning seventy-five dollars only, and even while I was still engaged in considering an acceptance or a rejection of the handsome bribe for what virtually amounted to a comparatively insignificant favor, my man further raised his ante to a cool five hundred simoleons. Without the least hesitation I called for the coin, and generously purchased for the stranger a ticket to his destination, which was nearby Sacramento, the capital city of California. After that notable experience, with me there were no bounds observed to my grafting, as I aimed to have my pickings before the harvest might be cut short by a recall order to headquarters to "go on the carpet" in private audience with Chief Crowley.

Speaking of graft and grafting in general, eh!—this reminds me of the memorable year of 1906, and immediately after the virtually total destruction of



San Francisco by earthquake and the subsequent conflagration. I had been employed as a "Special Officer" by one of the fairly innumerable dens of iniquity located on the "Barbary Coast," the infamous "Red Light" district of the metropolis, where during every hour of the twenty-four of the day was enacted, openly and, assuredly, with the complete connivance of the municipal authorities, a high-carnival of almost incredibly beastly immoralities, such as in their day sent historical Sodom and Gomorrha down in quake and fire before the wrath of the Almighty—as this terrible and unmistakably divine atonement was inflicted, and this too justly only, on San Francisco in our day.

Civic grafters had demanded and then collected of me two thousand dollars on a lease for the term of a year of a certain concession which under the guarantee of non-interference by the police authorities permitted the financial "trimming" of patrons of the Barbary Coast. Callously unmindful of their obligation, the arch-crooks had promptly peddled the self-same privilege to another offerer of a worthwhile bribe and then, again, to still other parties. In the meanwhile, orders were issued to the police officers to prevent all but the most recent one of the duped concessionaires from engaging in the "sure-thing" business covered by the nefarious transaction. The bluecoats were still further enjoined to allow no public outcry to prevail, as such an exposure of the graft might place on their personal guard prospective victims of the infamous municipal ring. To immensely aggravate the fury and indignation of their prey, the double-dealers refused not only to accede to a restitution of the moneys involved but also to enter into some sort of more or less equitable arrangement whereby a partial refund might be distributed to the bribe givers.

Pretty soon, there arrived an excellent opportunity

to avenge my wrongs of the corrupt municipal servants. I became affiliated with the Burns Detective Agency as an operative. This concern had been called in at the expense of public spirited citizens to undertake a thorough investigation of the almost incredibly bold municipal grafting carried on by Rough, the city attorney, and all the other city officials, who had come in office on a "Labor Ticket," that in due time was to become the original pattern for the men who brought to ruin the mighty empire of Russia later on.

Under the direction of the Burns people, I was called into court to be a vital witness against the civic offenders whose dishonorable tactics had all but made impossible the carrying on of legitimate business in San Francisco. I did my share to send the crooked outfit to cells in San Quentin.

Rough, the worst actor, drew down a term of fourteen years at hard labor. Mayor Schmidt caught a sentence of a like term but contrived to beat his case on an appeal before a friendly judge and lenient jury. The chief of police was summarily dismissed from office. Lesser grafters came away with jail terms or heavy monetary penalties for having prostituted their public oath. All in all—for the first instance since the foundation of the city, San Francisco received a thorough-going municipal house-cleaning.

Although the grafters had trimmed me to the tune of two thousand dollars, I obtained an inning of rich revenge and gained the satisfaction of the proverbial "Last Laugh." Providentially, almost, so it seemed, I had been released from San Quentin in good time to materially aid in dragging the civic criminals from their soft public berths in city hall and police headquarters to a sojourn in penal institutions.

They say in France:

“Il n’y a pas de sotes metieres;  
Il n’y a que sotes gens!”

meaning, translated into English, that “Everybody gains his peculiar reward.”

At this writing, I am resting on easy street—an honoralle, retired hobo who, withal, confesses himself as taught by practical experience that straightforward honesty is, absolutely, the sole pursuit to win out in the long race leading to complete contentment in life.

Am rather sorry that you reside so remote from San Diego, otherwise would have liked to look you up for a personal interview, where within a few minutes’ conversation one might intelligently and accurately explain more, by far, than in the hours I have devoted now on the construction on this unwieldy letter.

Yours truly,

FRENCHY.





## THE THIRD LETTER

### Straying Beyond the Narrow Path

Dear Friend:—

San Diego, Cal., Jan. 1, 1920.

Received your letter penned on Christmas Day, and I hasten to make amends in the matter of having quite overlooked to bid you and yours the compliments of the holiday season. Herewith, I express the hope that you folks may have had turkey bird in quantity as plentiful as you and I had this treat at Pensacola.

Please excuse the uncouth length of my recent communication. Then I happened to be just in the right mood to mail such a long epistle, as I became aware that in your person I had found, at last, somebody who possibly might appreciate revelations concerning my strange adventuring. This is something my dear wife and daughter have quite failed to comprehend all these years, as to them the scant bits of insight into my queer career I casually exposed, have had the unpleasant effect to only vastly more increase their rising suspicion that everything is not exactly as it should be with my antecedents.

As I had previously mentioned, I am now a solid and highly respected citizen of San Diego. But there was another day when I was ruminating at the very bottom of the social pit. And, truly, I have learned some of the roughest of lessons to be studied in the "University of Hard Knocks." When but a mere lad, I served six years in the apprenticeship of seafaring. For a long stretch I was a cabin boy—the dog of the ship. Maltreatment of a most revolting character was my daily fare. The "Cat-o'Nine-Tails" was ever hung handy for brutal action on my bare back, already sorely bruised by bootings and cuffings administered by the

crew. From ship master to mates and on down the tally to the riffraff in the galley of the cook, all delighted to take whacks at poor me whenever a least opportunity was offered to indulge in this entertainment that broke the monotony of existence common aboard sailing vessels engaged in extended sea voyages.

Wherever I was paid off or deserted the ship for the shore, the bosses of the sailor boarding houses who had in their control the hiring of the help for the shipping riding at anchor in the harbor, sequestered the larger portion of my withal pitifully small wage long in advance of my having rightfully earned the stipend, to richly compensate themselves for the indifferent care I had received at the boarding house and the "trouble" it had brought them to see me "signed up" with another captain. Finally, forsaking the thankless calling of the sea, I turned to farming. There, too, I ran into unusual quarters. Quite often we agricultural laborers were meted out treatment worse than that accorded to dumb beasts of burden. I do recall an excellent example—over in the rich Napa Valley of California. I toiled for a rancher so miserly that on every Saturday afternoon he paid off and then discharged his help. This saved him the expense of their keep over Sunday. Bright and early Monday morning he re-hired the same crew.

As I was a guideless and guileless youth cast adrift on a foreign shore, all the fierce knocks administered by the honest life of the masses struck home with simply appalling result. I became an associate of people who considered the commission of sin in the light of a pardonable sequence of the fearful abuse of confidence they had suffered while abiding by law and order. Again extending to you and your loved ones the good wishes of the Christmas tide, I remain,

Yours faithfully, FRENCHY.

## THE FOURTH LETTER

---

### The Reign of Demon Rum

---

San Diego, Cal., Jan. 14, 1920.

Dear A-No. 1:—

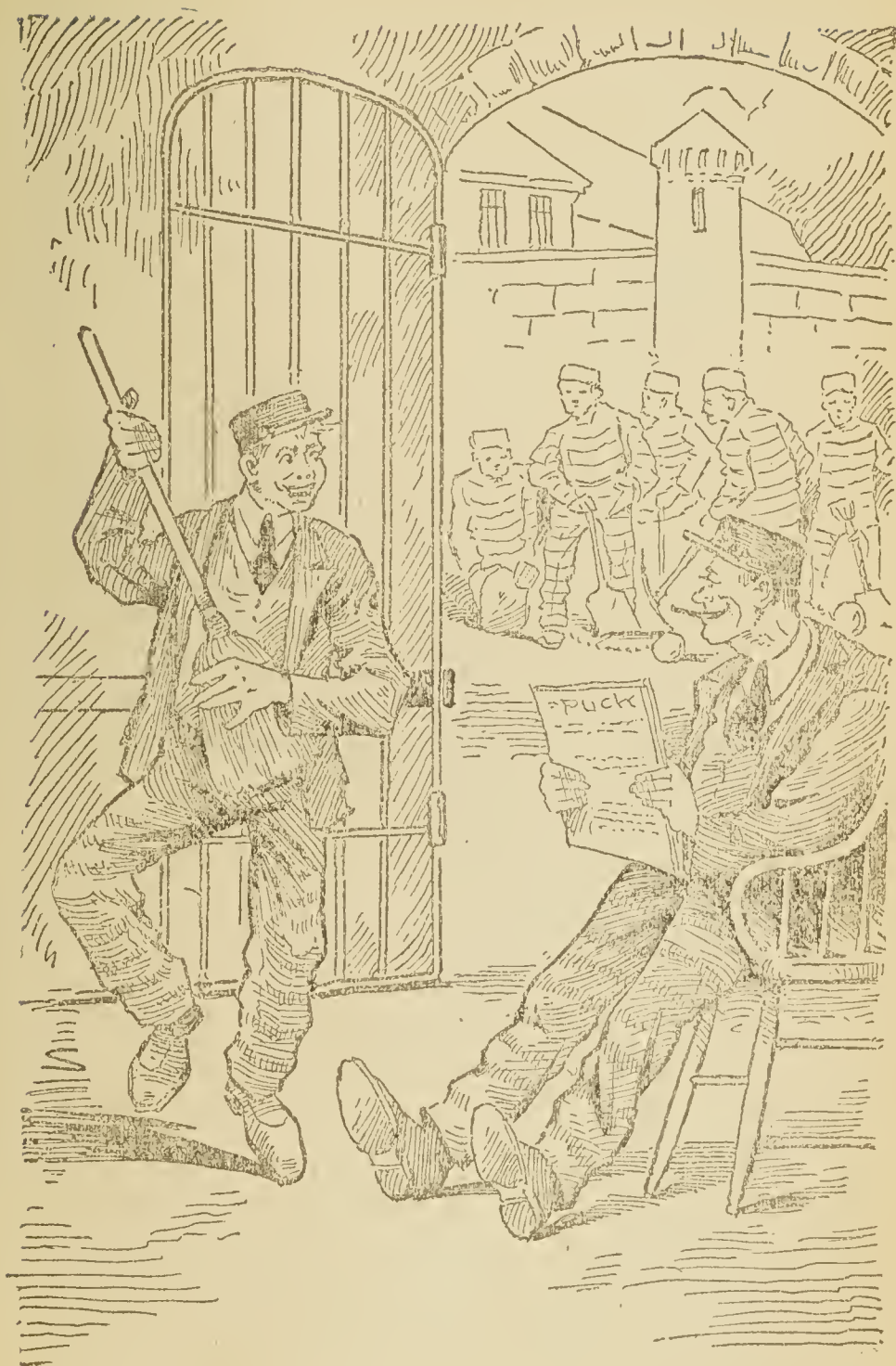
Your reply to my letter of the first of the New Year contained an urgent summons for a more detailed explanation of the vicious irregularities practiced by the municipal government of San Francisco.

Reaching back into my personal annals, you might recall that I confessed to having been confined behind the walls of San Quentin, doing a term of two years. I had drawn this penalty for having inspected the contents of the pockets of a foreman and five Chinese laborers of a crew employed on railroad track repair and whom I had encountered traveling aboard a hand car on a tour of inspection over the track section placed in their charge.

As I was apprehended without funds, when the case was called to trial, the court ordered a lawyer to care for my defense. Then it was the time when throughout the country of the Far-West the citizens began to agitate against the unrestricted importation of Asiatic labor. Addressing the jury, my attorney referred to the fact that had it not been for the Orientals, I and other toilers might be earning an honorable livelihood. He followed this line of appeal with a plea for extreme leniency. He did his job so thoroughly, that I was sent away to San Quentin under the minimum punishment assessed by law against highway agents.

While I underwent detention in the state penitentiary, several matters there struck me as being far out of sorts. The most dangerous ones of an aggre-





The more dangerous a criminal, the easier his task in the penitentiary.

gation of thousands of criminals collected behind the bars of the penal institution enjoyed the privilege of the softest berths at the distribution of the warden. There was "Black Bart." This fellow had gained a large measure of notoriety by the custom that while he professionally robbed stage coaches, he distinguished himself by courteous treatment of his victims. For the longest time he evaded all traps and snares laid for his capture, and the latter was only accomplished by a merest windfall on the side of his pursuers who were spurned on in their efforts by a heavy reward. Bart was let off easy by the courts, being given but six years at "hard labor" in San Quentin. There, forsooth, his task turned out to be a soft clerkship in the prison pharmacy. Improving a rich opportunity, he went in for trafficking whiskey and narcotics to other convicts at prices by the sip and pinch that no outside profiteer would have dared to charge by the quart and pound. During his leisure time, and the latter comprised almost every minute of his waking hours, the highway robber peacocked back and forth in front of the penitentiary hospital—he attired in fancy vesting and frock coat of fashionable tailoring. The only concession he allowed to prevail to indicate his status of a prisoner of the state were the regulation trousers he wore. But even this garment had been altered by re-dying with a tint so neutral that the original zebra striping was scarcely to be noted.

Jimmy Hope had charge of steam laundry at San Quentin. There he gathered a lucrative income by compelling the laundry force to do "extras" not only for the families of the guards but likewise for residents beyond the walls. And what was the worthy pedigree that had carried Jimmy Hope to having the right of way over his fellow felons in the matter of becoming a favorite with the powers? Jimmy Hope,

a professional cracksman, was caught in San Francisco in the act of tunneling beneath Montgomery Street towards the money vault of one of the richest of the numerous banking houses located in this, the Wall Street of the Pacific slope.

The more detestable the crime of the lawbreaker, the less his penalty in the courts and the greater his stranglehold on the privileges on landing in the penitentiary.

On finishing with my latest jolt, I arrived by steamboat in San Francisco where I chanced to drift into nearby Pacific Street at the location of the "Barbary Coast," the most notorious "Red Light" district of the American continent. I patronized a lunch room, where I enjoyed my first civilized meal after feasting on fare furnished by the authorities during the two years, less the "good time allowance" for exemplary behavior, I served punishment.

Returning to the sidewalk, I crossed the street to the "Olympia," a waterfront resort, having a saloon placed in the forepart of a large hall, the rear section of which was occupied by a dance floor. In the latter at small tables patrons of the dive were provided with liquid refreshments by buxom barmaids who received a percentage on the business they created by dancing with the visitors who were induced to squander their wherewithal. Besides this percentage, the painted harlots of the dance hall had the privilege to retain all cash and valuables they pilfered from the pockets of their prey.

Stepping before the counter of the bar room of the "Olympia," I ordered a glass of beer. This I drank at ease, while I endeavored to gain my bearings beyond the gates of the penal quarters whence I had departed that morning only. There was a motley crowd in the



place. Marines on their journey to and from the Philippines and other trans-Pacific destinations. Soldiers from the forts bristling the hills surrounding the Golden Gate, the entrance to the Bay of San Francisco. Sailors from warships and other shipping, representing almost every seafaring nation of the universe. Longshoremen and other grades of skilled and unskilled labor employed in the harbor. Something like fifty men were crowding at the bar counter, behind which three barkeepers were kept on the jump dispensing alcoholic concoctions, round on round.

Of a sudden, a soldier and a marine came to blows on the spur of an argument. Within another moment the bar room appeared converted into a battlefield, for all the drinkers promptly took sides. The quarrel soon had passed to the stage of a general melee, and in their mounting passions, the combatants soon forgot to discriminate between friend and foe. When bare fists proved too ineffectual to administer serious harm, the maudlin semi-savages resorted to chairs, bottles and other dangerous weapons to attack anybody within reach. Even the wenches employed in the dance hall deserted their posts to share in the scrimmage.

Although I was a disinterested stranger to the brawl, soon my neutrality was challenged by an intoxicated sailor who directed a knockout punch at the point of my jaw. I countered the blow, and this had the effect to have my assailant signal for assistance to his fellow mates. Assaulted on all sides, I stood off the mob and managed to pitch one of the infuriated rascals through the swing doors at the entrance of the bar room and then beyond upon the sidewalk of the thoroughfare. This performance brought a telephoned hurry call to police headquarters, but by the time a patrol wagon loaded with bluecoats dashed to the rescue, I had deposited no less than five of my oppo-

nents either in the street or on the floor of the bar room.

Instead of placing the unruly fellows under arrest, the police officers simply endeavored to restore the peace. Before long, the erstwhile mortal enemies stood lined up before the bar counter, there regaling each other and everybody, including the policemen, to drinks and cigars. A police surgeon who had accompanied the run of the riot patrol, looked after the needs of the lesser wounded, and, finally, an ambulance carted off the more seriously injured to a hospital.

During the progress of the altercation, the owner of the "Olympia" had remained in the rear of the bar counter to stand guard over the contents of the cash registers. When concord had returned, he beckoned me to have a smoke at his expense, friendly remarking he liked the way I had handled the "skuffs," and averring that he stood in holy terror of having murder committed on his property. This led on to a conversation, in the course of which I mentioned to be in search of employment. He immediately offered the position of special officer and watchman on the premises. This job chanced to be standing vacant, the latest incumbent having received such a sound trouncing at the hands of rough visitors to the "Olympia," that over in the hospital he was lying at the point where his chance of recovery was hanging in the balance.

As the official bouncer of the "Olympia" I was to receive a weekly salary of twenty dollars, bed and board. Besides this regular stipend, there was to be earned a bonus of fifty cents on every rowdy I threw from the premises or hammered into submission. I was advised that it was considered nothing out of the ordinary when on Saturdays, also on Sundays and holidays, the extras mounted above fifteen dollars, the

resort being kept running full blaze every hour of each day throughout the year.

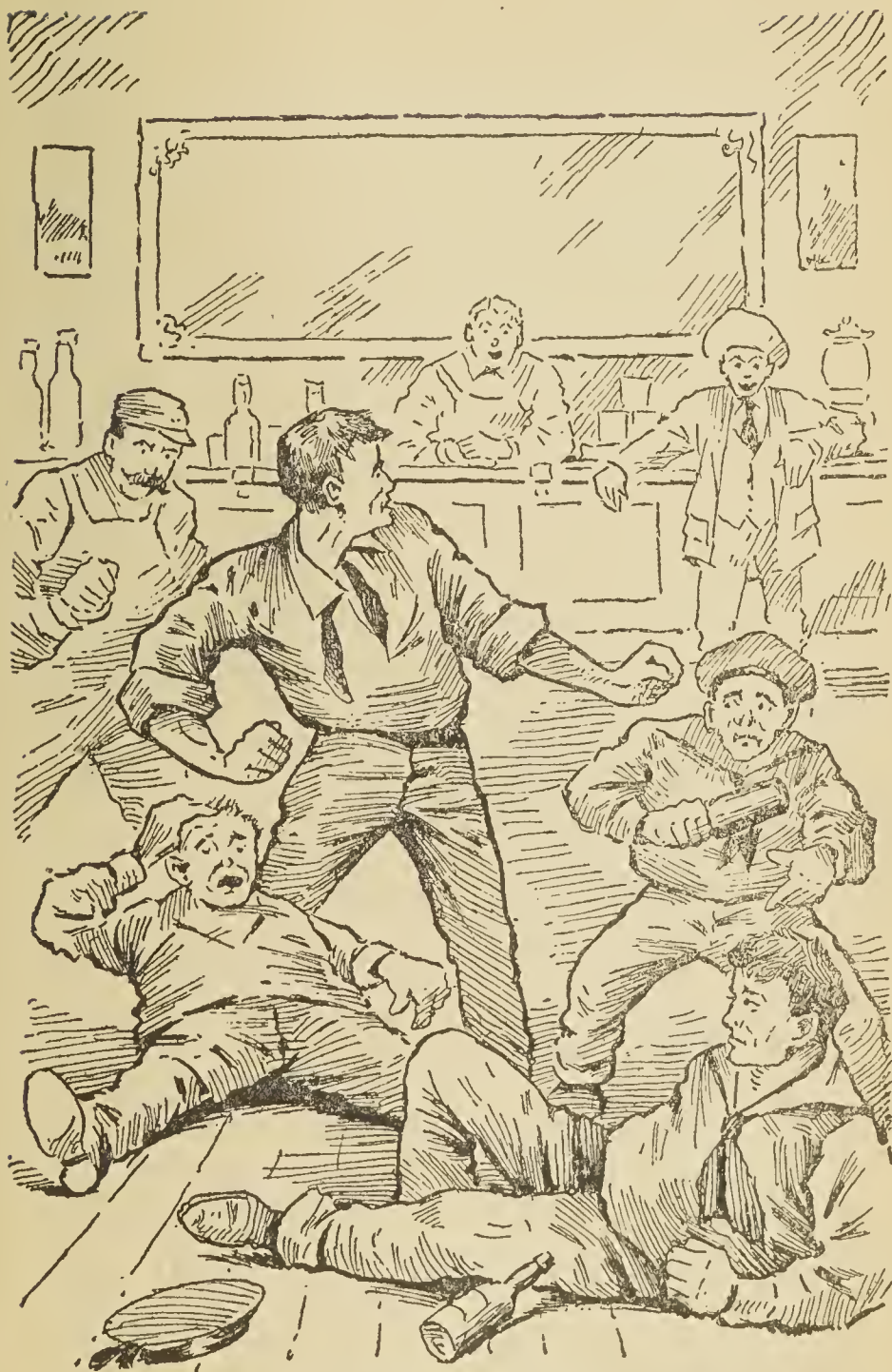
The proposition appeared to be such an attractive one, that I accepted the job on the spot. Still, there were several preliminaries to be observed, so I might enact proper police authority. My new employer furnished a penned note that I was told to deliver to Chief of Police Whitman of San Francisco. This police official, in his turn, handed me his calling card, and then ordered that I see the "boss" of the city.

When I reached the address, the entrance to an office bore the legend, "Abraham Rough, City Attorney." On opening the door, I landed in a large ante-room where two people, a man and a woman, were awaiting an audience with the lawyer, whom I had heard denounced by the inmates of San Quentin as the arch grafter of the century.

Opening a conversation with the waiting man, he frankly admitted to wanting to obtain a concession permitting his opening a grog shop in a district the respectable residents whereof had fought, tooth and nail, against an introduction in their midst of a rum dispensary with all the evils attending. Nevertheless, the scoundrel presumed that it would require a bribe of around fifteen hundred dollars to "turn the trick."

When the saloon man was called to hear his fate, I quizzed the woman. Rather talkatively inclined, she explained having drifted southward from the cities of the Puget Sound country, where another periodical reform wave had closed every house of ill-fame and other civic cancers. She had traveled to San Francisco to open a bawdy house and was now in the waiting room to seek by means of outright bribery an official sanction for her revolting enterprise. She confessed that she had been to see Rough on the preceding day. He had demanded a cash-down payment of twenty-five





Frenchy gave a good account of himself.

hundred dollars, to be followed by a liberal weekly "sprinkling of the flowers." The latter expression signified that she was to donate to accredited ward heelers a weekly tribute representing the major portion of the income derived by her house of assignation. The immoral wench, though, being of somewhat thrifty turn, had offered the attorney a compromise of fifteen hundred dollars cash and no further financial leeching. This handsome contribution was churly rejected by the boss grafter who, angered by her haggling tactics, used unbridled language to have her comprehend how small he took her offer, when the total of "lefthanded" revenue collected ran into the millions of dollars annually.

When the scarlet woman was asked to step into the inner room of the office, for the moment I felt like vaulting from the waiting room. This odd sensation was derived not only by the deep loathing I experienced from the awful arraignments I had heard pronounced against the man at the helm of government of one of the continent's largest and most prosperous cities but, rather, I had arrived in a flash at the realization how woefully I lacked the means to properly "cross" the itching palm of the villain. Only a couple of dollars remained with me of the five dollars donated by the state of California to every prisoner on his release from San Quentin.

Even before I had come to a definite decision as to whether or not I would have the courage to see the matter through, I was ushered into the presence of the prince of grafters. Rough commanded me to occupy a chair standing near his desk. I briefly outlined the scope of my errand. The lawyer replied by stating that to be recommended to the "star" of a special officer required an advance settlement in the sum of two hundred and fifty dollars. Quite thunderstruck by the

magnitude of the bribe extorted for a service so trifling, I enacted the motions executed by a person discovering the absence of his pocketbook. Then I requested a leave of absence until the following day.

Returning to the "Olympia," I related the particulars of my odd encounter. On mentioning that I was without the means to meet the bribe, the owner of the resort advanced the amount required.

In the morning I reported at the office of the city attorney. Assuming a matter-of-fact demeanor, that would have done credit to an honest business man, Rough pocketed the blood money I had brought. When I requested a written receipt acknowledging the payment, the rascal tastily retorted that in all San Francisco his verbal attest counted for vastly more than any bescribbled scrap of paper. He made this grandstand play of injured innocence in the face of the widespread public report that he recognized no honor among thieves.

The city attorney led the way to police headquarters. There the police commission happened to be sitting in an executive session. The clerk of the meeting was ordered to give my application an immediate reading before all other public business. Then Rough entered the arena in my behalf, stating that he personally knew me to be a most exemplary citizen, one who spent all his days in the locality. At the conclusion of his speech and immediately after he had mentioned that there was no official objection to my being granted the appointment, he brought his fist banging to the top of the table by which he stood. Probably, this was the pre-arranged signal of the conspirators, for without deigning to even send a glance in my direction, the puppets of police commissioners forthwith, and unanimately, passed the ordinance that conferred police authority on a stranger who had come straight from



the cell house of San Quentin. When I was sworn in, there were two other fellows to the job, who had purchased promotion in the regular police force. Everything was on sale for a bribe! Again—nothing was to be gained without villainous bribery!

On entering on my task as special officer, I received an initial and only instruction to govern my activities. Irrespectively as to whether I considered myself as acting with or against justice, the interest of the "Olympia" was to be protected under all circumstances, always.

Scarcely had I been on the job an hour, than I was buttonholed by a gent who introduced himself as a lawyer. He promised to pay a handsome retainer, scaled in accordance with prospective earnings, if I would agree to keep him carefully posted on all arrests I scored of people of means. Soon after his departure, I was called to the telephone to converse with a party who was desirous of obtaining a "strictly private" interview with the "new" watchman. He was the doctor usually called to the resort whenever there was a case on hand of somebody having been wounded in one of the frequent fracasces or—other common occurrences—such suffering by an attack of delirium tremens (snakes). The medico offered a knockdown of twenty per cent, and an additional fifteen per cent was to be given on "rowdies" I had finished off in such shape that the ambulance of this particular physician had to be phoned for to convey the stricken troublemaker to the hospital, if not worse. The mistress of a disorderly house located nearby put in appearance to make arrangements whereby I was to receive a division on a fifty-fifty basis on all income she gathered off customers I had directed to her brothel. A dealer in castoff clothing engaged himself to pay a worthwhile commission on all business he derived from people who on

finding themselves short of cash were willing to meet this particular secondhand merchant to exchange their wear for disreputable rags and be paid a cash settlement in the bargain. Besides, the shopkeeper volunteered to purchase at highest market price everything I brought to his store left behind by careless visitors to the "Olympia" or patrons of the latter who were too intoxicated to properly care for their belongings.

There were so many other callers offering attractive remunerations for all sorts of more or less shady favors that I promptly concluded to have landed in a position exceedingly bright with opportunities for quick wealth.

This being the day of my official tryout, I acted with circumspection in the matter of how badly I mauled or mangled any patron I was commanded to subdue. Still, as this happened to be the afternoon of a Saturday, before nightfall my earnings in "extras" had mounted to twenty dollars, when I was called to convey an especially boisterous guest of the "Olympia" to a cell at police headquarters, where he was to be held until morning to be prosecuted in the city court on a charge of breach of the peace.

When I carried the man before the desk sergeant at the police station, even previous to this officer registering his name and offense, I was directed to examine the contents of the apparel of my prisoner. This search brought to light a dilapidated corn-cob pipe, some messy matches, several free lunch tickets and other such worthless articles. On having assembled everything taken from the pockets in front of the sergeant, I reported the task completed.

It was then that I received a reprimand so scathing, that in all my after-life I have quite failed to completely overcome the effect. For while I faithfully fulfilled the instructions of my employer, at the same time in

my innocence I had grievously transgressed against the business ethics observed by the police of San Francisco.

For the moment, the officer-of-the-day stared at me in dumb silence, as if incapable to select the proper expressions to state his case. His ugly countenance assumed an ever more florid color until, finally, he bawled out savagely: "I'm going to hand you some valuable free advice, young fellow! Don't you ever dare to bring another bum to headquarters! Otherwise, you will be out of a job mighty quick! We have no time to bother with the like of him! You should have taken him to some quiet nook in a park or on a wharf and lambasted him soundly! Now, you and him make haste to decamp from this office!"

Crestfallen, I obeyed the invitation extended by the police officer. When I had liberated the offender, I hurriedly returned to the "Olympia" where I scarcely dared to look into one of the many large plate glass mirrors let in the walls of the resort, in fear that I might find myself decorated with a set of donkey ears, such was the outrageous chagrin I felt by the reproof which had arrived at the exact minute when I had fondly believed myself capable of lording it over everybody within reach.

This was my fourth day at the "Olympia." I was engaged in the dance hall, where I was amicably settling a difference that had arisen between a sailor and a barmaid, whom the former was accusing of having lifted his purse. Amid copious sobbing, the young harlot declared that she was a "real lady" and, therefore, quite beyond suspicion of committing such a crime. As it was my duty to iron out all troubles, I pointed the mariner to a poster that cautioned visitors of the fact that the management of the resort would not be held responsible for the loss of valuables.



When still the seafarer refused to be comforted, in all faith I suggested that he accompany me to the nearest magistrate to swear to information warranting the arrest of the woman he had charged with the theft. The bluff worked to perfection, for when I casually-like mentioned to the blue jacket that if his accusation failed to hold water, most likely the girl would turn about and have him held for the courts, charged with criminal libel, the fellow sobered in a jiffy, and soon the principals in the affair had made their peace.

Then it was that I heard two short blasts by whistle. This was the pre-arranged signal that my presence was wanted in the bar room. Rushing there, a sight met my eyes. One of the barkeepers had been laid out on the floor, unconscious. Another was stowing a current of blood squirting from his smashed nose. The third was in a huddled heap, nursing a badly battered jaw. A burly chap stood his field in the center of the rum shop, where he viciously swung a heavy chair about his head, while he yelled, that unless he was handed the correct change, he would still further "clean up" the "Olympia." Evidently, the stranger objected to being "short changed," a common practice on the Barbary Coast, where in breaking a large coin or greenback a goodly sum was palmed by the thieving gentry who considered everybody their legitimate prey.

Under my contract, I was expected to down the enraged husky, who in his intoxication might turn out to be a most dangerous adversary. Tightly clutching my police mace, I cautiously approached the rowdy and executed a feint in line with his ribs. On lowering his arms to protect vitals, I allowed the heavy night stick to drive straight to the point of his chin. As if struck by lightning, the fellow sank to the floor. Before he had regained the command of his senses, I had him securely handcuffed. When a search of his

pockets revealed a sufficiency of wherewithal to permit the trip to police headquarters, I telephoned for the patrol wagon.

Arriving at the police station, I examined the belongings of the prisoner even before the haughty desk sergeant had invited this inspection. From an inside coat pocket I drew a bank deposit book which showed that the bearer carried a handsome sum in a local banking institution. A solid gold watch and chain was taken off his vest. I removed a large diamond from his necktie. But the biggest surprise was a thick and heavy wallet of buckskin that must have contained a most likely amount of money. Even before I had an opportunity to ascertain the total of cash in the wallet, the latter was snatched from my hands by the sergeant, who snarled that the examination of purses was an exclusive privilege of members of the regular police force. While he attended to the counting—and, doubtlessly, heavy discounting—of the wealth contained in the wallet, I was directed to lock the stranger in a noisome cell. On returning the cage key to the keeping of the officer of the day, he most cordially patted me on the shoulder, while he averred that I learned enough of the police business to properly understand how this was transacted only on a “strictly commercial” basis in San Francisco.

Even while the police officer was recording his remark, I felt faint at heart as I recalled the fate of so many of the inmates of San Quentin who were languishing there for terms up to a complete life time, because they had enacted the selfsame performance which I had just fulfilled on the express orders of a representative of the same police authority that had legally apprehended, convicted and, finally, condemned so many of the other lawbreakers to their living tomb.

When I returned to my station at the “Olympia,” I



Now Frenchy was a good fellow.



soon discovered that everybody tipped his hat to me, figuratively speaking, for it seemed that I had become a popular hero in a jiffy, and this all the more markedly in the esteem of the barmaids employed in the dance hall, who behaved on edge with sheer chagrin when they heard of the riches carried by my prisoner. The "girls" lamented their misfortune of having missed going through a "good thing" and promised to pay an even larger percentage on their pickings off persons I played into their hands, than was subsequently handed me by the desk sergeant over at police headquarters.

Releasing myself from the circle of my admirers, I hurried to the telephone to post "my" attorney on the plight of the fellow I had caged at the police depot. Sure enough! Several days later the lawyer slipped me twenty dollars. He cautioned me that on future notifications of like character, I could not act too promptly, as the first moments spent in solitary confinement by a man of means were the most productive ones to scare the imprisoned person as then the mental anguish occasioned by the thought of the unpleasant consequences of his arrest, such as newspaper notoriety, etc., readily placed him where he would prove exceedingly tractable in the matter of separating himself from a big wad of money on the plausible assurance that the law shark "might" obtain his prompt release from the custody of the police.

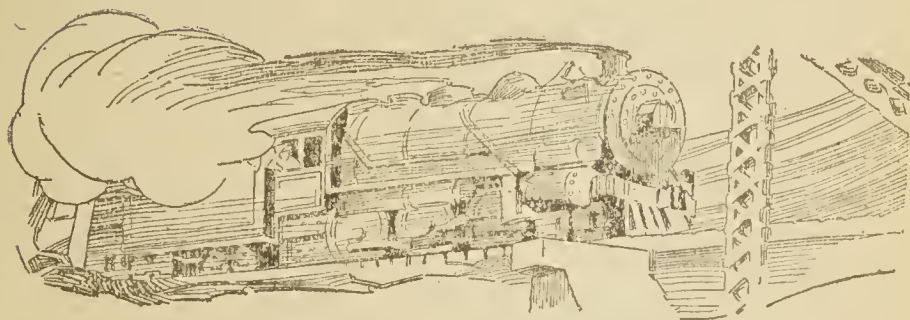
I have never been able to ascertain the exact amount of cash left in the hands of the hounds of the police and those of the crooked attorney by their victim, though judging the sum by the not inconsiderable fee I received of the sergeant of police for my initiation of the unsavory affair, I am quite satisfied that never again will the sufferer in this travesty on justice dare to raise an outcry on being "short changed" in graft-ridden San Francisco.

When I had accumulated a sufficiency of working capital to see me further on the way, I resigned from the dangerous job, well forewarned by the fate that overtook my predecessor who finally succumbed to his injuries—mourned only by his widow and seven minor children whose daily bread to gain he had valiently fought the thankless battles of the “Olympia.”

Hoping soon to have another interesting letter to mail you, I am,

Yours truly,

FRENCHY.



## THE FIFTH LETTER

---

### Glimpses of the Abyss

---

San Diego, Cal., Jan. 25, 1920.

Dear Friend:—

Here I am with the letter I promised. But before proceeding with my revelations, I desire to call your attention to the circumstance, that while apparently the general trend of my correspondence might be translated by biased persons as opposed to the existing order, in actuality quite the contrary is the case. And this despite the confession that throughout all my days I have had to hear anti-government isms expounded from soap boxes and other stations of ready vantage wherefrom the minds of the lower strata of society were gradually, though nevertheless surely contaminated by the virulent poison which converted so many formerly rationally thinking toilers into rabid demonstrators against the present ways of society.

Reverting to chronicling of personal experiences—my first tramp-railroading was done on the Gulf, Colorado & Santa Fe beyond the port of Galveston, where I had deserted my ship because of maltreatment. On roaming northward, at Brenham, Texas, I accepted a position with the kitchen department of a railroad construction outfit. In this capacity I quickly mastered the vocation of the chef. In the year of 1880, when the Sunset Route was being built Pacific-ward beyond San Antonio, I occupied a variety of jobs with this system. I was a flunkey, at times a teamster, and when my funds ran low, I was not above tackling the rough rut of the digger of right-of-way ditches.





Frenchy as waiter.

Again, I worked in the eating houses then scattered only as far as El Paso. At another period, I acted as a newsboy aboard passenger trains. I deemed myself immensely benefited by this employment. I learned the importance of pennies, which heretofore I had never valued properly. I received a practical training in the fundamental and elemental principles of business in a way that this science might never be acquired more interestingly in any of the other honorable pursuits available to the average lad.

During this term of gaining a clean livelihood, I, who was soon to turn professional defier of law and order, gained no end of opportunities to watch other folks stray beyond the narrow path. I am quite willing to profess, that during my career of hobo, I took many an advantage to examine the contents of unguarded grips, trunks and other containers of the traveling public. Occasionally only, I appropriated some necessities for which I had an immediate use. Otherwise I never touched anything, so great was the risk I ran to be caught in possession of such property by minions of the law who were everlastingly subjecting to search and cross-examination strangers vagabonding on highways and railroads. Just the same, the mere announcement by the affected, brought the daily papers to carry a long list of articles reported as missing by the owners of the satchels and the like. Women proved the worst offenders. When I had made off with some shoddy woolen garment, they callously reported the theft of a sealskin sacque worth into the hundreds of dollars for which they demanded restitution by the transportation corporations.

Here I have another illustration of a sharp practice now placed in discard by the efficient work of the railroad police departments. Returning from abroad with wife and daughter, I stopped at a Jersey City terminal

to check our luggage to San Francisco. The baggage master, obviously supposing that I was provided with an individual ticket only, proposed to clear "on the quiet" my baggage through to destination without complying with the formality of paying the straight rate for the excess weight the station scale registered. For this accommodation he requested a settlement of ten dollars. He assured me that his left-handed charge was most attractive in view of the fact that the regular expense would amount to that given sum on each hundred of the four hundred pounds he believed I carried in excess weight. Would I be willing to enter into this scheme that would prove so profitable to the contents of my purse? The fellow almost toppled in his tracks with sheer amazement when I produced the other two tickets, the complement of which combined with the baggage allowance on the transportation I held, entitled us to the free carriage of an even greater weight of baggage than we journeyed with on this trip.

Referring to an inquiry inserted in one of your letters, to explain what it was that had driven me to make common cause with the Road, where nothing but unlimited misery was to be gained, will say that the brutalities I encountered during my seafaring life headlong drove me into the arms of voluntary vagrancy. In the days antedating the advent of the World War, no other class of toilers was being exploited, and with a more barbarous inhumanity, than they who went in ships to sea. Among all other experiences, there is this telling example—by actual accounting I received in cash in hand less than a tenth of the wage promised me by my captains.

Have I ever mentioned how I landed behind prison bars for a first time? I was oversea in the city of Antwerp, Belgium. There I had "signed articles" with the commander of a full-rigged sailing ship for a round-



trip covering North and South American ports. Even before my signature had dried, the captain ordered my detention by the police to insure my presence when his vessel set sail. I was kept caged with the riffraff of Europe. Three weeks went by, then, manacled like a dangerous criminal or maniac, the police delivered me at the shipside at the exact moment of the heaving of the anchors preparatory to an immediate departure from the port. When we arrived off Montevideo, Uruguay, we of the ship's company were furnished with spending money for a brief holiday ashore, and when casually informed that I had earned but a fraction of the wage I had contracted for, I was surprised, and very much at this, to hear that the captain had deducted from my meagre compensation the fees paid by him to the Belgian authorities for my imprisonment in their "royal" calaboose. As the stern Law of the Sea compelled strict obedience to the mandates of the master of the ship, who had as his concession the judgment over the life and death of his subordinates, I meekly maintained the peace without voicing an open protest, though on reaching the port of Galveston, I deserted the ship.

Other items culled from my personal experience—it was in the day of Hiram Johnson as governor of the state of California. Hard times prevailed on the Pacific slope. As jobs were exceedingly scarce, several hundred of the unemployed citizens undertook to camp on some vacant lots in the capital city. The poor fellows humbly requested that the state authorities supply tasks so they might earn their daily bread lawfully. It is alleged that it was Governor Johnson who ordered the fire department to play streams on the campers as a means to induce them to leave Sacramento.

Some ten years antedating this sousing episode against the jobless, Banker Brown deliberately wrecked

the "California Deposit Company," defalcating on six millions of dollars which largely represented life-time savings of four thousand members of the poorer classes. Hiram Johnson, then a lawyer, so ably "defended" the prince of high finance, that the rascal was sentenced to the ridiculous term of sixteen months in San Quentin. This penalty was by two months less than that usually drawn by a John Tramp for being caught by the police on three separate occasions while in the act of panhandling provender. Although in all probability this arch-thief had made away with more cold cash than had been stolen by several generations of criminals caged in the California state penitentiary, Brown was received like an honored guest at the penal institution and forthwith was installed as a clerk of the prison library, where he was largely saved from too personal contact with the common run of crooks undergoing confinement.

For reasons most evident, I should not complain against the doings of fellow lawbreakers, still I wish to say, that I was among the thousands of sufferers by the dishonesty of Banker Brown, who appropriated some twenty-five hundred dollars which I had carelessly given in his keeping with nothing but the mere bank book to show for my misplaced trust. In the year of the earthquake and conflagration, 1906, I dropped another five thousand dollars in a most peculiar sort by committing the blunder of carrying a policy for the fire protection of my home with an insurance company that pointblank refused to meet its just obligations by going in the courts and pleading bankruptcy. Even before the whirlwind of public indignation had died away, the same insurance concern had itself declared solvent once more by means of a shady re-organization scheme. Even to this day the concern is writing fire insurance on the homes of other dupes

—Barnum was right, every minute produces its easy-mark.

Another telltale yarn—down in Georgia, C. D. Button, a renegade Northerner, had himself appointed as the lessee of state convicts, paying one dollar per diem for their use. For the guidance of the convicts he coined this fateful motto, “Work like a dog or die like a dog.” Should any person have dared to maltreat his dog or other dumb brutes with a fraction only of the incredible viciousness that this “Yankee” applied on “his niggers,” be they either black or white skinned, the offender would have quickly received deserved punishment. Among the thousands of victims of this fiend incarnate in human guise fell a young Englishman of aristocratic lineage. This Briton had the misfortune of being shipwrecked off the coast of Georgia. Almost stripped of apparel, the mariner set out to reach the nearest consul or other representatives of the English government, and while on this errand was picked up by a fee-hungry deputy sheriff, who saw the unfortunate chap sentenced to a term of a half year with Button. The food provided by the latter was so revoltingly insufficient and coarse, that the outlander caught the “Pellagra,” an incurable skin disease. On serving seven months—the surplus month was in payment for a pair of rough boots furnished him by the convict contractor—the foreigner was released from his savage slavery. In course of time, the self-same ex-prisoner rose to a position of high eminence in the councils of the British empire. In the meanwhile, and throughout his days of exquisite suffering by the pestilence he had contracted in the Georgian prison camp, the stricken man spent a fortune consulting with specialists and others who in vain attempted to relieve him of the dread affliction.

Yours truly,

FRENCHY.



## THE SIXTH LETTER

---

### Sidelights of Life

---

San Diego, Cal., Feb. 15, 1920.

Dear A-No. 1:—

This time I shall relate for your entertainment the details of odd encounters, the last two of which again conclusively prove the truth that lawlessness of whatever character is a poor investment, invariably.

It was some eighteen years ago, that I, then on railroad police patrol duty, was sent to Porta Costa, California, where tramps had thrown a train man off the cars, inflicting mortal injuries. My orders were to make it unpleasant for the box car tourists and to keep them moving.

As all trains had come to a lengthy halt at Porta Costa to await their turn to be ferried across the Strait of Carquinez, connecting Pablo Bay with the Bay of Suisun, even before the first night on my guard assignment had grown old, I had picked up so many trespassers off the cars and the right of way of the Southern Pacific, that the town calaboose held its capacity of prisoners. Among the latter was a burly Irish lad whom I had registered under the name of "Casey." Another of the "boys" was an intoxicated pegleg whom I had arrested on the pressing complaint of the conductor of a passenger train, that while the cripple was panhandling alms in the coaches, he had insulted every passenger who dared to refuse his demand for money. My troubles began in all earnest when I went to take charge of the pegleg, for the onery cuss straightaway flopped himself full length into the aisle of a coach, and it required the

assistance of passengers to bodily carry the rascal to the town calaboose, located but a step beyond the tracks. I promised the vagrant to see that he was given a sentence of six months, at the least. But in the morning I was to discover that I had made this pledge without taking into consideration the manner of magistrate holding office at Porta Costa.

Judge Casey, owner of a combination saloon-hotel, was the magistrate of the village. His court room was located in a room beside his place of business. At the time, the squire had it in hot and heavy for the Southern Pacific, and it is necessary to explain matters for the better comprehension of the events that followed. But recently the privilege of free transportation had been nationally withdrawn from the favorites of the railroads. This was a rough dose for those who, like Squire Casey, had enjoyed for themselves and their families the rights of the "complimentary pass." Now forced to pay for transportation as all unfavored citizens, after all these years of scotfree traveling, there was ample cause for the deep grudge Casey was said to harbor against the Southern Pacific.

Bright and early on the following morning I lined up before Judge Casey the vagabonds I had "jugged." The first one of the lot he ordered arraigned happened to be the scrapper of a pegleg. Savagely, almost, turning on me, the squire asked how I dared to arrest a poor, "helpless" cripple? Even before I had recited the particulars of the battle it had taken to cage the troublesome fellow, the magistrate not only ordered his discharge from custody but to add rancor to my disappointment, he slipped his hand in his trousers' pocket and handed a silver dollar to the man I had promised six months of hard labor. At the same time Casey sent a searing glance of utmost disapproval in my direction, as if to indicate the contempt he held for

a man in the uniform of the railroad police. The next prisoner to be called before the bar of justice was the burly Irish train hopper. When the magistrate had taken a due recognizance that the accused happened to be his namesake, the squire fiercely bawled, "And you, a 'Casey', allowed yourself brought here without having given a good account?" Then, and with not so much as a reprimand, this prisoner, too, was allowed to go unpunished. The other hoboes, though, did not fare quite so well, as each was handed a term of three days to be served in the county jail located at Martinez.

On reaching the county seat of Contra Costa county with the batch of uncouth prisoners, I was met by the sheriff, who rudely inquired if the Southern Pacific thought that the county prison was kept in commission as a special boarding house for bums rounded up by the private police of the railroad. In other ways, he tersely indicated that neither he nor other local citizens harbored any friendliness for my employers. Here, as back in Porta Costa civic differences underlay my tart reception. The community of Martinez and the Southern Pacific were at sharp outs, because the railroad refused to halt its De Luxe trains at the sleepy and unimportant inland burg. In prompt retaliation, the elders of the village had rushed through council an ordinance that made it unlawful to run trains within the town limits at a greater rate of speed than three miles per hour—mere turtle racing. Many of the train engineers either forgot or contemptuously ignored the annoying regulation and being timed by spotters in the employ of the village authorities, were haled into court and heavily fined. Assuredly, the transportation companies had other enemies besides the train-trespassing tramps, I should reckon!

Delivering my convoy of hoboes into the care of the




sheriff, I returned to Porta Costa, where a message awaited me that I was urgently wanted at the saloon owned by Squire Casey. With tears welling in his eyes, I was met by the magistrate at the entrance of his groggery, who humbly pleaded that for another time I should take a personal charge of the same pesky pegleg whom Casey not only released from custody but regaled to boot with the gift of a dollar. During my absence and that of the local deputy sheriff, who had assisted with the delivering of the convicted trespassers to the Martinez lockup, the crippled mendicant somehow had contrived to hatch the crack-brained notion that he was 'properly endowed to have the run of Porta Costa to suit his sweet will. Investing in strong dram not only the dollar donated by the squire but all the alms he had gathered in the coaches prior to his own arrest, the abbreviated slab of humanity had defied Casey to bounce him from the saloon. When, fairly howling with rage, the irate squire had undertaken the task, he not only was given a sound thrashing at the hands of the ingrate he had befriended, but in the bargain lost two costly platè glass windows from the front of his rum dispensary.

That Judge Casey should prove capable of having the unexampled nerve to request that I restrain the intoxicated cripple within bounds where he might not further harm his erstwhile benefactor, aroused my resentment to the highest pitch. Employing rather unminced language, I told the booze seller that should the frenzied pegleg finish up with a complete wrecking of Porta Costa, I would not lift a finger to stop the rampage, as I was solely in the service of the Southern Pacific. This sharp rebuke caused Casey post-haste to telephone to Martinez for an immediate aid by the county authorities. While all Porta Costa breathlessly awaited developments, I cautioned the

warlike cripple of his peril of arrest. Then I helped him crawl aboard a box car in a train traveling to the Mole of Oakland, where he might obtain a better show to disappear from view than at Porta Costa which was completely surrounded by high, but barren hills.

With the pegleg removed beyond the reach of all concerned, I almost collapsed by laughing, when I overheard how thoroughly the sheriff of Contra Costa county, who with his cohorts of deputies, all armed to the teeth, had raced by motor car to town to subdue the "murderous" cripple, read a stinging riot act to Casey for having led the officers on a veritable "wild goose chase." After due consideration of my position at Porta Costa, now sure to be made even more uncomfortable, I wired Chief Kindelon requesting another assignment, and suggested that he forward for my relief one of his genuine "O'Brien's," so as to be able to deal with Judge Casey who in all probability might prefer an officer really hailing from the Emerald Isle.

---

 VER in Ogden, in the state of Utah, I was arrested on suspicion and was sent for a term to the local chaingang. On the very first day of toiling solely for my board, I staged my escape from the public works, and walked to the nearest water tank beyond the city limits, where in due time I caught a ride on a coach truck beneath a fast, westbound express. While this train was being held twenty minutes for lunch to the passengers at Winnemucca, I strolled about the station platform to stretch my cramped limbs a bit. There I came across a steamer trunk standing quite unguarded. Temporarily assuming the vocation of a busy depot porter, I unconcernedly shoul-

dered the piece of baggage and marched to the nether side of the train. When the latter departed from Winnemucca, I had straddled a brakebeam and had drawn the trunk to my side on the wobbly seat. When Reno, another Nevadan town, was reached, as I had completely wearied of the roughshod hoboing, I decided to quit the cars to take a rest. But when I attempted to drag my loot from its berth, the steamer trunk had become tightly wedged within the frame of the coach truck by the action of the air-braking machinery which had drawn taut the brakebeam. Then, quite timely, a car inspector happened along, and kindly lent a helping hand dislodging the steamer trunk from its peculiar pinch. When I had carried the luggage to a hobo jungle to investigate its contents, the latter proved to be a complete hunting outfit belonging to some Nimrod of unlimited means, judging by my general improvement in appearance on having discarded my rags of the Road for the swell toggery of the sportsman. There was no train that night, and when in the morning I chanced to scan over the news printed by the local daily, immense was my satisfaction to read how the car inspector had duly reported my advent in Reno and had made it a point to mention that of the thousands of hobo tourists he had seen riding and hiking into the city, I was the initial case where one of the men of Hoboland had arrived in town with his baggage properly checked in on a brakebeam ticket.

Still another good story of the Wanderlife: At Marysville, Yuba county, California, a store owner had innocently permitted a case of merchandise to stand unattended in the night in front of his mercantile establishment. I came along, just having vacated an empty box car in a freight train even now being held in the railroad yard nearby. Temptation to examine

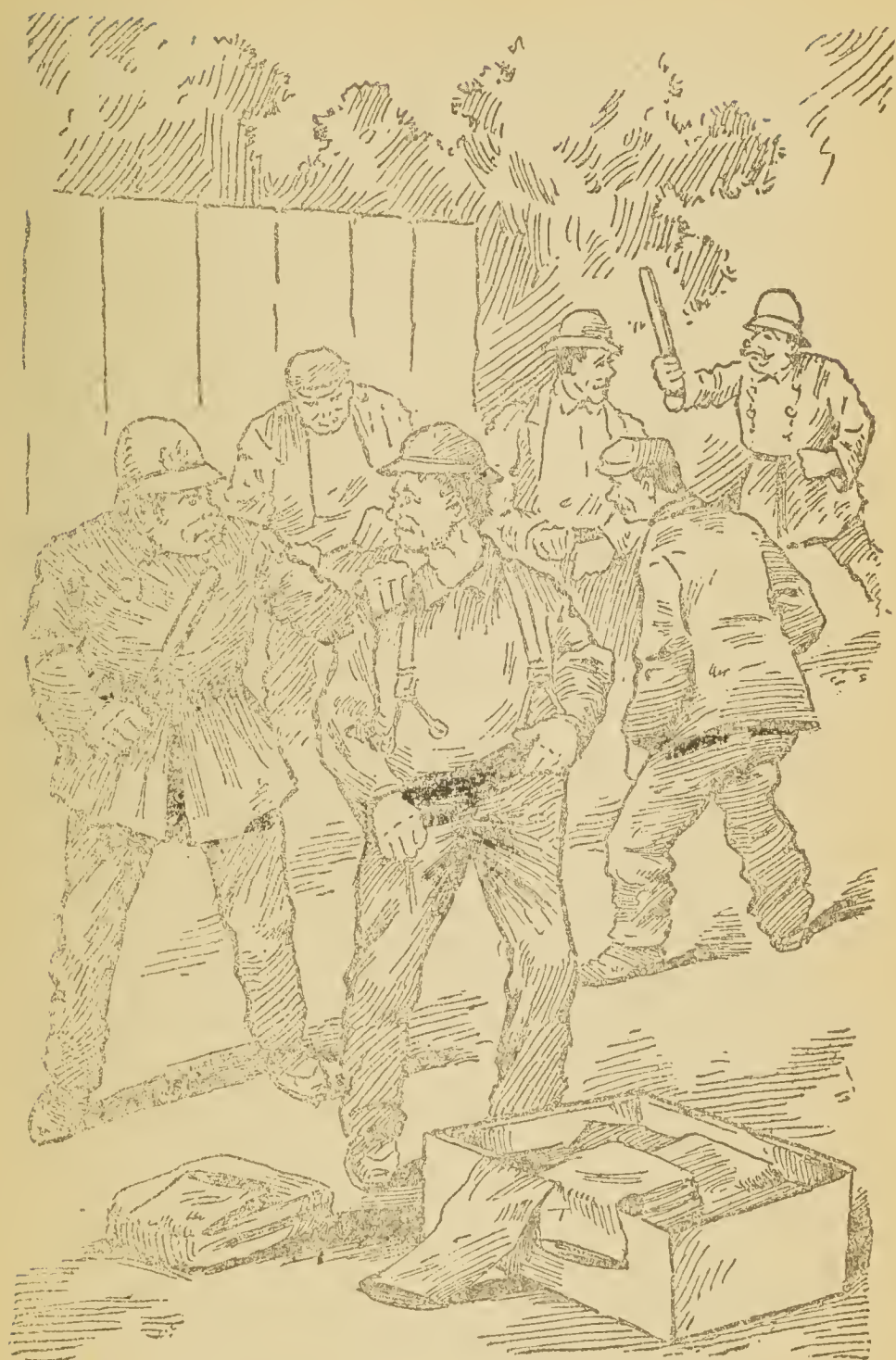


at leisure the contents of the packing case carelessly left in the public street proved so overpowering, that I brought the box to the empty freight car and while the train was on the way, I ascertained that the shipment consisted of a couple dozens of corduroy trousers of an unusual light-blue hue. At Wheatland the train registered a first halt beyond Marysville, and here was the center of a hop-growing section, where the harvest was at its height in the hop gardens. As hoboos furnished the transient labor required, and then worked sporadically only for the sake of remaining in a state of semi-intoxication, I calculated correctly, for in the morning when I reached the camping ground of the vagabonds, there quite a number were on hand. Although a majority of the campers carried spending money, I was unable to open a trade with my loot until I offered a gratis pair of corduroys to one of the tramps, to have him display their natty appearance to his fellows. The scheme worked to perfection—I soon had disposed of the trousers at a dollar the pair. Returning to the railroad, I went on my journey to San Francisco, where I rented lodging quarters at a hobo dump. Here I came in possession of the laughable incidents which came to pass subsequent to my departure from Wheatland.

The same tramp I had supplied with the gratis pair of the corduroy strides for use as live bait wherewith to rid myself of the other trousers, proud of his likely possession, had lost no time going into the town to see what dandy figure he might cut with the lassies of the hop burg. In the meanwhile, the police authorities of Marysville had wired the particulars of the theft to all surrounding communities and had taken an especial care to report their outlandish coloring. As a matter of course, the constable stationed at Wheatland had received his message of instructions,

and as a likely reward was offered for the apprehension of the perpetrators of the crime, he decided to be on a sharp lookout. Sure enough! Before very long he had come across the scamp sunning himself in front of the town saloon. Holding the stranger to account, the man willingly explained how he had acquired the trousers and where the others might be located. Promptly a posse was formed, and guided by the hobo, quickly every camper rigged up in a pair of the stolen strides was rounded up. Although the men under arrest proved they had no connection whatever with the actual commission of the theft, they were not allowed to remain unscathed, because employing a method generally observed by hoboes, the tramps had consigned the trousers they had doffed to destruction in the campfire of their hangout. As some punishment was thought to be in proper order, the Wheatland magistrate sentenced each to serve a term of ten days in the county jail at Marysville.

At the county seat was played the final act of the affair, when the insurance company, with which the merchant had carried his policy protecting him against financial loss by burglary, entered with the sheriff a legal claim for the recovery of the trousers adorning the persons of the Wandering Willies. Although the hoboes most strenuously objected to the queer process of law that wanted to deprive them of the vital item of their clothing, all their wailing and teeth gnashing turned out to be in vain. The insurance adjuster gained possession of the stolen property. As an aftermath, for days those of the sufferers who were unable to promptly panhandle proper covering, for obvious cause were compelled to remain hidden in the dark recesses of the basement of the Yuba county calaboose.



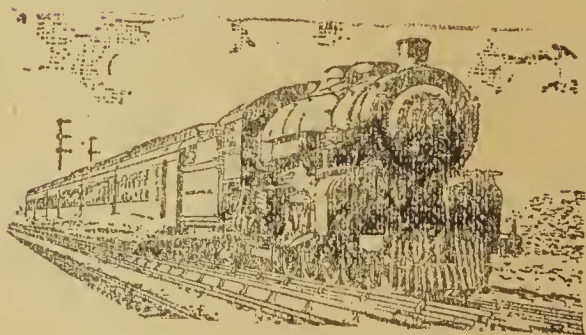
The John Laws claimed the trousers.



So-long for to-day, A-No. 1, and please note the lesson to be learned by the contents of this letter, "that everything in any way connected with dishonesty seems to be thoroughly permeated with misfortune."

Yours truly,

FRENCHY.



## THE SEVENTH LETTER

---

### The Chink Runners of the Border

---

San Diego, Cal., March 10, 1920.

Dear A-No. 1:—

Your letter, of Feb. 27, reached my address at this belated date, and at a moment when I happened to be in the correct receptive mood to continue our pen-chatting.

Among the companions of the Road with whom I associated after our leave-taking in Western Florida was the "Johnny Kid." This youth had deserted his slavery of cabin boy aboard a Nova Scotian clipper. Copying the ways of the hoboos, he had drifted inland until he accosted me in the thoroughfares of Denver for the loan of the price of a lunch. Taking the youngster to a restaurant to have him provided with his needs, the lad made such a favorable impression, that I proposed we travel as hoboing mates.

On our route to Seattle, we fell in with a fellow who told us of the simply astonishing earnings to be gathered by men acquainted with seafaring who might be willing to risk their neck and liberty while engaging in the smuggling of proscribed Chinamen and other Orientals from British Columbia, in the Dominion of Canada, by way of the waters of the Puget Sound across the American border into the state of Washington.

As both of us had served a part-apprenticeship aboard ship, we decided to change from lawbreaking by land to that by water. But stripped of money, as we were, we felt it impossible to obtain a ship suiting our purposes. Then we chanced to remember the

worth of advertising in the press. Following suit, we inserted a catchily worded announcement in the dailies of Seattle asking for a small, but fast ship. When answers were received, we set out to inspect the offerings. We visited a sloop which though its hull leaked like a bullet-riddled tub, carried a fine marine engine. At another point of the waterfront, we were taken to examine a boat with a hull in fair repair but supplied with machinery that was little better than junk.

After nightfall the Johnny Kid and I unlashed a dory moored to a buoy, and then rowing alongside the leaky sloop, we quickly took down the engine and on heaving the machinery into the dory, we hurried to the craft with the seaworthy hull. Working with might and main, we soon had dumped its delapidated engine overboard and then installed the motor we had brought along, so that long before break of day we had sailed away to British Columbian waters where we were safely beyond the jurisdiction of the American authorities.

While Johnny Kid repainted and otherwise thoroughly disguised the identity of the ship, I visited the Chinatown of Vancouver, where I entered into negotiations with the headmen of the various Chinese tongs who promised an advance payment of fifty dollars for the delivery of any of their countrymen to a well-concealed point on the far-flung shore of the Puget Sound beyond the American boundary.

We prospered exceedingly, but we never dared to take more than four Chinks across on a trip, though our sloop had ample room to carry six of the treacherous Orientals. I should mention, that we encountered many perilous brushes with federal agents patrolling the American border to guard against smuggling of debarred aliens.

When Johnny Kid had saved sixteen hundred dollars



as his portion of the fifty-fifty division of earnings, he came across an ancient map of Old England, the country of his nativity. His close study of the dilapidated geography brought on a case of intense homesickness for his folks. Determined to visit with loved ones, when all my entreaties to have him change this project proved futile, I bought with my personal savings his transportation by first-class passage to Europe, and saw him off on his trip. Before long I disposed of the sloop for a tidy sum and then turned my attention to search for a less dangerous occupation.

On taking a review of my smuggling operations, I congratulated myself on having fared so well with the venture and I firmly thought that nobody of the calling could have bettered on my financial returns—until I was to become thoroughly disillusioned on this score while I was in the employment of the police department of the Southern Pacific. There I was to frequently hear of smuggling undertakings which brought from me the self-confession that in all reality I had been a rank amateur at the game. For instance, a gang of highest officials of the customs service were convicted in the federal courts for having manufactured spurious passports by the wholesale. These forged instruments were shipped across the Pacific to be bartered in the market places of Hongkong, Shanghai and even Manilla where one hundred and fifty dollars was paid by Asiatics desiring to enter the United States without encountering interference on part of officials implicated in the fraud.

While telling of the activities of the "Chink Runners," I recalled an adventure of kindred portent. In 1878, while I was stranded in a sailor dump of Liverpool, a friend of mine offered to pay my passage back to the United States as a steerage passenger on the "England" of the National Line. The ship had loaded

some 1200 steerage passengers, mostly low-grade Scandinavians, Hungarians and Pollacks. Our traveling between decks was like that of sardines packed into a tin container. The "burgoo" served five times daily, smelled so that one could scarcely gulp the grub. To cap all the tribulations, the tub of a steamer consumed a solid month of exceedingly stormy weather to accomplish the traverse of the Atlantic.

Again, it was in 1900 that I had another occasion to travel oversea from Europe, and in this instance I went as a first cabin passenger on the "Kroonland" of the Red Star Line. There was classy company in the cabins, waited on by gaudily liveried flunkies who jumped at beck and call. In the course of the journey, I became an appreciated associate of people of or connected with the leading families of both the American and European continents. I truly envied these "gentle-bred" persons, as I innocently supposed they had never seared the purity of their souls with the indelible crimson stain of crime. I carried this laudable opinion all the way across the Atlantic—until the good ship stood off the port of New York. Then my eyes were opened to the actual state of affairs. My "strictly pure and stainless" friends began to scurry about like hawk-frightened hares hunting for cover. They were searching to find hiding places for valuables they desired to slip undeclared through the customs service of the United States. Having gained their complete confidence during the trip across, not a few of the criminal smugglers came to me for advice how to most effectively foil a possible search of their persons and belongings by the federal customs employees.

Verily, personally to me, the ex-lawbreaker, there stood revealed one telling difference between the "children of the steerage" of the "England" and the pampered members of the "exclusive" set with whom I

had associated in all the glitter and pomp of voyaging in the first cabin of the Red Star Liner, in that the former were merely ragged without, while the latter were thoroughly ragged within.

Again, I would enjoyed to have beheld the "holy terror" affected by fellow travelers of the "Kroonland," had I revealed for their edification, that the man whom they were according their unabridged confidence had in his day boosted slant-eyed Mongolians over the Canadian-American border of the coast country of the Pacific-Northwest. Certainly, in such an instance the social-aristocrats would have employed better discretion than they assuredly displayed when they made me their confidant in the matter of smuggling inland diamonds, laces and other valuables worth into the thousands of dollars in each individual case.

I see our mail carrier at the street corner nearby, and now hurry to close this letter to have it on its way with sincere personal regards for you and your family by

Yours truly,

FRENCHY.





## THE EIGHTH LETTER

---

### Interesting Mentions

---

San Diego, Cal., March 24, 1920.

Dear A-No. 1:—

To-day I am in receipt of the group-photograph of your family circle. Even this late, I am noting a strong resemblance between you of over thirty years ago and your features of this date. I took an abounding interest in the neat appearance of your children—a credit to the good mother of the boy and the girl. But do not take offense when I friendly and yet in all seriousness suggest—let this be enough offspring. Children are a most expensive luxury nowadays. To raise, provide for and educate them properly so they may obtain a fair chance in life, means not only a vast expenditure of money but even more of patience connected with no end of worry. There are so many, many youngsters growing up that will prove themselves walking disappointments to their loved ones—just you remember our own instances as you and I failed by a long shot to approach the hopes of our parents.

Personally, I am quite contented to bring up one child, my daughter. She shall enjoy the best of schooling and, if so inclined, we will see her graduated from a college and, probably, from a university. Besides, we have given her seven years of piano lessons.

The gods did not thus pamper her parents—not by any means! And just you listen to have the whole truth of our beginning of existence. I, her doting father, at twelve was a cabin boy aboard a sailing ship. Her mother was slaving at thirteen in a French sweat shop, earning not over ten cents daily at fifteen hours per

diem regularly, and with Sundays and holidays included for good measure, while largely subsisting on the famed French national dish, "bouillon," a broth concocted of some three quarts of water flavored with a couple of onions, as meat could not be afforded at the starvation wage she earned. I might properly mention, that whatever charity I am able to dispense, is mailed across the sea to France, where so many of our relatives were recently only delivered from the yoke of Germans who on a fair average crippled or murdered about three of every four adult males of the French republic.

Regarding the untimely taking-off of the late Chief of Police Kindelon of the railroad police of the Southern Pacific, whose corpse was discovered still in death in a park of San Francisco. I was strangely affected by the announcement of the demise of my erstwhile superior officer, and I immediately recalled the fate that overtook another police official—that of Chief Biggy of the San Francisco police force. This efficient officer strived to reform the metropolitan police department, then thoroughly demoralized by graft so vicious that it transgressed beyond the bounds of ordinary decency. One fine morning, he was fished stark dead from the waters of the Bay of San Francisco. How he had come to such a finish still remains one of the unsolved riddles of the city. There were two theories advanced, though. Either the police chief, who in the prime of life and at the zenith of his chosen career, had deliberately jumped to his death or an enemy had inveigled him to the edge of a wharf and then had treacherously pushed him overboard. Anyhow, it is worth observing, that none of the police detectives assigned to fathom the mysterious demise of their late chief, wasted time to get at the bottom of the tragedy, that by official inactivity was allowed to

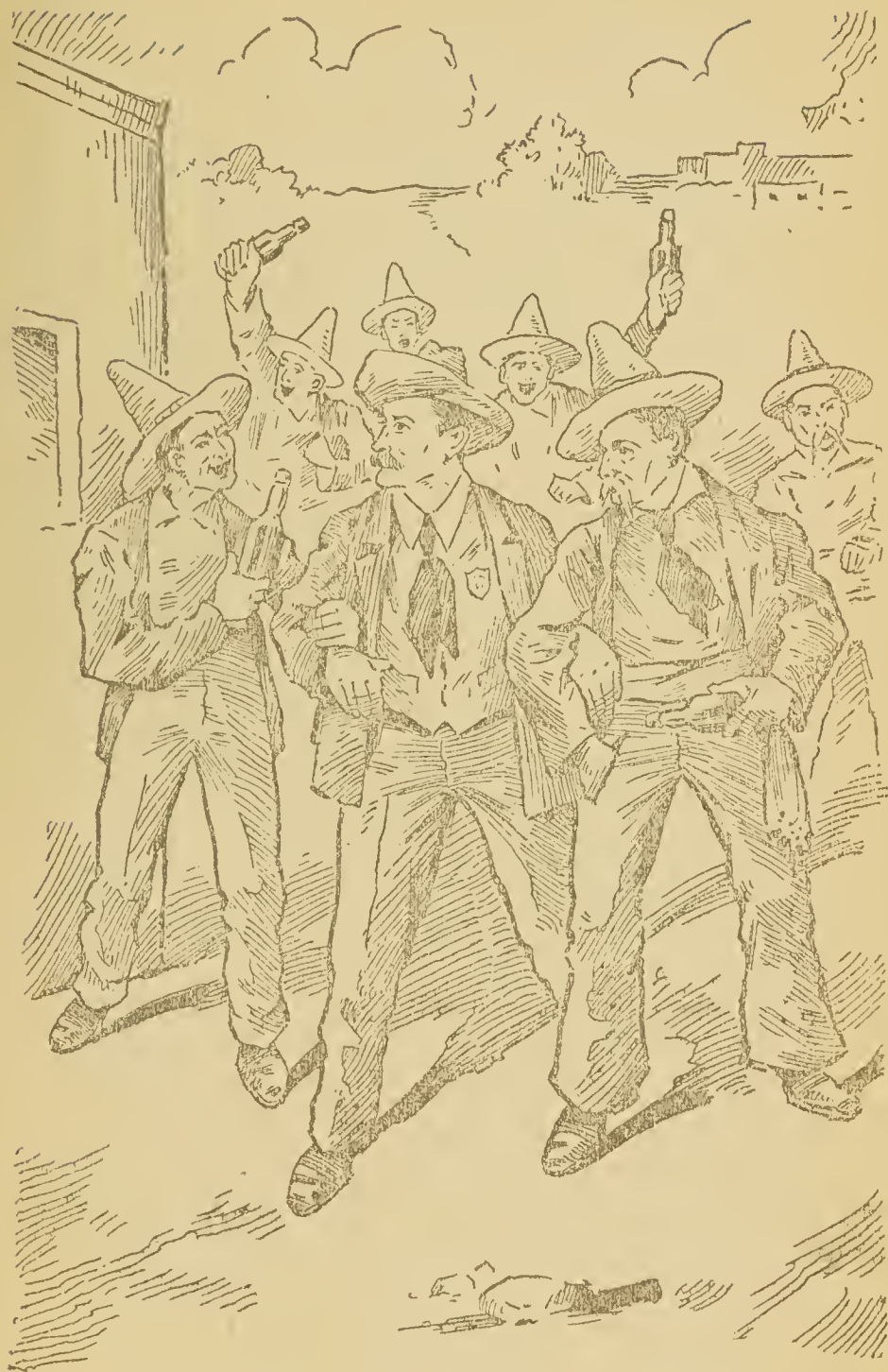
promptly become forgotten. Truly, the road of the reformer of any police department is a dangerous one to travel, and was this most especially the case, when the man desired to benefit the general public.

Among highly cherished mementoes of my days in the employ of the police bureau of the Southern Pacific, I hold a final recommendation countersigned by Chief Kindelon, and which document was furnished at the time of my "honorable" discharge from the service of the railroad. In this letter Kindelon frankly stated that among other assignments, fulfilled to the entire satisfaction of my superiors, I had been stationed for two years at railroad police headquarters in San Francisco.

Actually, I believe I bested Kindelon at his own police game! I virtually "broke" into his private office to learn by direct observation and, largely, under his personal tutelage, everything worth while of the methods he enacted to put an end to depredations against the property of his employers. I claim the distinction as an offset against the practice by Kindelon to visit, disguised as a tramp, the hobo camps to glean news covering thefts and other crimes already committed or merely contemplated against the Southern Pacific.

While speaking of corrupt police schemes—it was in 1882 that I, then working as a deputy sheriff of Cochise county, Arizona, with office at Tombstone, carried standing instructions whenever an election was held, to herd in all Mexicans I might lay my hands on. The illiterate foreigners were plied with rum purchased at the expense of the candidates in favor with the high sheriff of Cochise county. When the Mexicans had arrived at the proper stage of befuddledness, where they declared themselves to be "American" citizens properly enfranchised, then only we permitted them to cast their vote—in favor of our candidate.





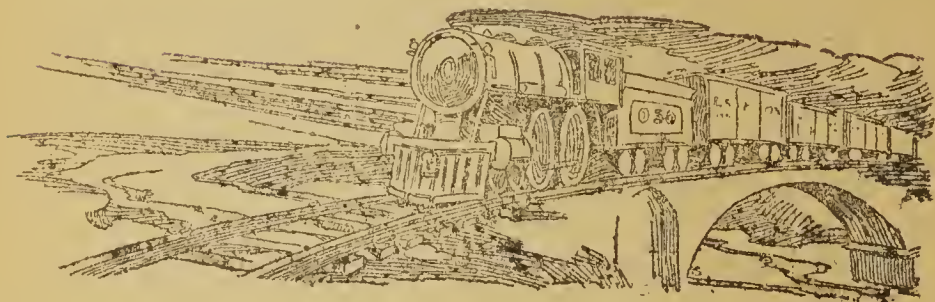
The Mexicans always voted for our man.

Those were the days when millionaire mine owners and others commanding ample funds, commonly purchased for spot cash any office within the gift of "THE" people.

Again thanking you for the photo received to-day,  
I am

Your good friend,

FRENCHY.



## THE LATEST LETTER

---

From Oversea

---

Paris, France, June 24, 1920.

Dear Friend:—

I will thoroughly realize the state of your astonishment on beholding the French postage stamps affixed to the front of this letter, announcing my presence in France. On the spur of the moment, and also in response to the pitiful appeals for prompt succor by my war-stricken relatives, I decided to personally attend to their relief and, at the same time, view the almost indescribable ravages which the war had wrought in the northern, the industrial section of the French republic by the repeated sweep, back and forth, of the armies of both friend and foe.

On my overland trip I passed through your city of Erie. I would have liked to have paid my respects to you and yours, had not the sailing date of my steamer been so near at hand that a stopover was impracticable just at this time. Unless an unkind fate intervenes, I promise, though, to break my rail journey on my return voyage from Europe.

Here then, I am in France, the land of my birth. Forsooth, though I am of French nativity, still I am a true American citizen, having seen to my naturalization on the day I arrived at man's estate. I am placing a heavy emphasis on the proud fact of my American citizenship for the better understanding of anything I might mention in connection with the ways of the French.

My first errand on stepping ashore, was to carry aid



to members of my family, who were thoroughly pauperized through no fault of their own. In this task I was immensely favored by the adverse exchange rated against the French franc, no less than twenty-eight of which were required to release a single dollar of our American coinage, where in pre-war days the standard charge stood at the ratio of five francs only to the dollar.

On having satisfied the pressing needs of my people, I went traveling to view the recent battle front extending from Belgium to below Belfort, a French fortress adjacent to the Swiss border line. I inspected the prodigious trench works where the German invaders were held in check by the war-wearied allies until our American boys helped to win victory on victory and the armistice was signed which forever blasted the ambition of the Hohenzollerns to rule the universe from Berlin.

While sightseeing in Europe, I noted how the populace woefully lacked even the more ordinary home comforts deemed indispensable by American and Canadian housewives. The bath room, as we enjoy this necessity, was little favored, as even in the residences of the well-to-do the common wooden laundry tub was resorted to to furnish the wherewithal for the week-end ablution of the membership of the European family. Laundry chutes and stationary trays, our standard kitchen range, the electric sweeper, motor-driven washing and ironing appliances, the warming of the house from a centrally located heating plant, and a thousand and one other transatlantic household facilities were conspicuous by their absence. Among the other oddities I encountered while visiting on the battle line—at Nancy, France, we stopped overnight at an ancient castle which had been converted into a hotel. In this structure there were no less than an

even hundred fire places—one for each guest room—but nary a sign of a common bath tub.

On the other hand, we self-complacent Americans might learn a valuable lesson from our French cousins residing in Alsace-Lorraine, the “lost provinces” but recently restored to France. When the Germans had vanquished the French in the war of conquest of 1870-71, on finding the surrendered country inhabited by an utmost French-patriotic population that would never voluntarily permit a change in their nationality enforced by the hated conquerors, the latter attempted a peaceful assimilation of the natives by resorting to a colonization of the countries with settlers of Teutonic origin. We Americans, to judge this from recent events with obnoxious foreigners, would likely have taken to the proverbial fire and sword to rid ourselves of the undesirables whose home governments, so it certainly seemed, were only waiting to take exception to our rash tactics, which might have involved us in war or other costly vengeance.

The weapon of effective defense used by the French was the “silent boycott.” As a preliminary step of staging this enterprise, every adult Frenchman was induced to affiliate with an anti-Germanic association, the members of which were pledged not to carry on menial, social, commercial or any other intercourse whatever with either the colonists or any of the officials in the pay of the German empire. Any Frenchman, however wealthy or influential, caught transgressing against this secret covenant, was called to strict account before a tribunal of his fellow conspirators and punished so severely that he was not likely ever to forget the lesson of applied patriotism.

By this means the alien settlers and merchants foisted on Alsace-Lorraine were quickly, and yet safe-

ly, carried to the conviction that naught but starvation threatened them and theirs and, proving even more annoying, felt themselves subjected to a relentless ostracism which, and this in no time, brought the intruders to whine to their government for return-transportation to the fatherland.

While traveling in France, I became painfully aware that the French bankers, with whom I came in contact, behaved most outrageously suspicious towards all American tourists. Before long, I heard of the cause underlying this radical unfriendliness. A low-lived son of America but recently had landed at Bordeaux with several thousand notes of the currency issued by the erstwhile Confederate States that so very closely resembled the standard greenbacks of similar denominations distributed by the United States. The slippery swindler shrewdly took every advantage of the fact that this was the day of wildest French enthusiasm at the victorious termination of the war, when in their hurricane of heartfelt thankfulness the bankers of the French republic had cast aside their everyday prudence and so fell an easy prey to the enterprising criminal. The rascal contrived to convert his worthless notes into some millions of good, though temporarily depreciated French francs. Just prior to his hornet-mad dupes unearthing his villainy, he departed for parts unknown. Quite naturally, though, from this source sprang the chary and most uncordial reception accorded American travelers.

While touring in that district of the kingdom of Belgium located in the environs of war-scarred Ypres, I improved the occasion by visiting at nearby Merxplas. Here the Royal Belgian Commission for the Suppression of Vagabondage had established a penal colony for the punishment and reform of tramps. The sentence imposed by the courts against such characters



invariably called for an indefinite term of detention at hard labor, the discharge from custody altogether depending on the willingness of the imprisoned to prove their effective cure.

Quite unsuspecting that he was volunteering to act as a guide for an American who had been a professed hobo in his day, the superintendent of the "royal" hobo colony afforded every opportunity to inspect the reformatory and study the inmates at first-hand. The Belgian brand of mendicant in no respect had attained the standard developed by his counterpart beyond the sea. The Belgians were of shambling gait and displayed in their brutish countenance every indication of a degenerate intelligence not far above par of that of a dumb brute. The convicts, though, seemed to be well treated and acted as though thoroughly satisfied to undergo a penalty that deprived them of their liberty.

As I traveled on the highway beyond Merxplas, I interviewed agriculturists I encountered while they tended the acres adjacent to the road. Alike, the farmers quaintly expressed their innermost contempt for the penal institution placed in their midst, when they passed an identical judgment, as follows: "*Je ne puis pas comprendre pourquoi ces vagabondes vivant du gras de la terre et nous et familles ne pouvons pas rien de seur de notre travail.*" (Translated: "I fail to understand why these tramps should be fed on the fat of the land while we and our families are scarcely able to gain a living by the sweat of our brow.")

Traveling along the trench line towards the French-Swiss frontier, on arriving off Switzerland, I journeyed to Witzwyl, where the Helvetian republic had opened a tramp colony which was closely patterned on the Belgian example I had studied at Merxplas. As in Belgium, so here at Witzwyl the imprisoned bummers

not only were employed under the guidance of experts on growing of vegetables and other green stuffs for sale on the public markets in ruinous competition with the native farming population but here, too, the hoboes were rented out at a most ridiculously small daily compensation to agriculturists in need of "cheap" labor.

As a matter of record, the well fed and paid officials placed in charge of either the Swiss or the Belgian project, loudly proclaimed the immense success of the penal venture. In this the officers acted quite unmindful of the circumstance that the hobo colonies were bringing utmost demoralization to the countryside. The citizens most harmed by the short-sighted policy of their governments were everlastingly praying for relief and the quick return of the day when it could be better afforded to feed an occasional beggar at the gate from the fullness of the family board, where now the identical unwholesome outcast was converted, and this with a vengeance, into a national pet and ward who virtually and virulently competed with the common people for the daily bread.

Another observation: Coming a close second in the matter of direct destructiveness of human life through the havoc wrought by the continual warfaring that seems to have become a veritable obsession of the ever-quarreling nations of that continent, Demon Rum still holds his stranglehold on Europe. Men, women and even minor children are daily guzzling strong dram by the liter measure in public places, as well as in the privacy of their home. Everybody seems to be afflicted with this national curse—from the kings down to the lowest of the low—all are squandering every available penny on alcoholic poisons.

Truly, Europe offers a fertile field for the activities of persons endowed with the courageous cast re-



quired to combat King Alcohol in his almost impregnable outhold where, at that, he is wreaking his greatest wrong on suffering humanity. Hard drinkers are afflicted with overheated blood, overwrought nerves and twisted mentality, and especially when complete nations are involved, as this is the case with the French and the German, they make exceedingly irritable, if not entirely irrational neighbors. I firmly believe that with the total eradication of the booze evil, the Europeans will bid farewell forever to their favorite pastime, which since time immemorial they rated as the most honored of all honorable pursuits—that of murdering human beings by the wholesale under the plausible pretext of righteously waging war, when in sheer reality they were merely attempting to satisfy an insane and almost insatiable lust for killing and maiming brought on by a criminal overindulgence of intoxicants continued through ages on ages. Verily, there is a just logic to my assertion, that with the withholding of grog in every form from the alcohol-parched throats of the Europeans, these will observe the peace, and, consequently, universal goodwill will be born to bless the world forever and ever.

As the French republic, here, offers a most limited field only for extended sightseeing, measuring European distances by prodigious American dimensions, when these lines reach your hands, I shall have taken steamer at the Mediterranean port of Marseilles for New York, where I shall select an overland railroad route that will permit my stopping over at Erie.

Until the day of our impending reunion, I remain,

Your good friend,

FRENCHY.



Instead of the expected visitor in person, there arrived a train message the contents of which are given herewith:

Western Union Telegram

Buffalo, N. Y., July 9, 1920-5:41 a. m.

Aboard of Pacific Limited,  
N. Y. C. R. R.

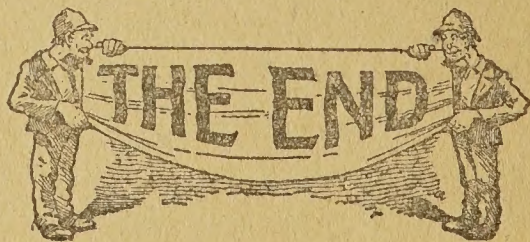
Impossible to break trip because of close steamship sailing at Seattle for Fairbanks, Alaska, to look after important mining concession. Will meet you another date.

Signed: Raoul Voleur.

---

Only a few days after the receipt of the train telegram, the mail brought a picture postal card carrying a brief annotation announcing the embarkation of Frenchy on his Alaskan errand.

At this date—May 24, 1921—no further written line or any other sign of life has reached my address. Therefore, and in all probability, an unkind fate had placed a final "FINIS" to the strange career of the venturesome French-American who broke faith with the Road and Crime when he had learned to a sufficiency what sort of thankless existence was his who disobeyed the mandates of Law and Order.





# A List of the Books

WRITTEN  
BY

→A-I

THE FIRST BOOK  
LIFE AND ADVENTURES

THE SECOND BOOK  
HOBOCAM

THE THIRD BOOK  
THE CURSE

THE FOURTH BOOK  
THE TRAIL

THE FIFTH BOOK  
THE ADVENTURES

THE SIXTH BOOK  
THE WAYS

THE SEVENTH BOOK  
THE SNARE OF THE ROAD

THE EIGHTH BOOK  
FROM COAST TO COAST WITH JACK LONDON

THE NINTH BOOK  
THE MOTHER OF THE HOBOES

THE TENTH BOOK  
THE WIFE I WON

THE ELEVENTH BOOK  
TRAVELING WITH TRAMPS

THE TWELFTH BOOK  
HERE AND THERE WITH A-No. 1

The Author has carefully avoided the least mention of anything that would be unfit reading for ladies or children.

A complete set of these moral and entertaining books should be in every home.

RARE BOOK  
COLLECTION



THE LIBRARY OF THE  
UNIVERSITY OF  
NORTH CAROLINA  
AT  
CHAPEL HILL  
Green  
211



